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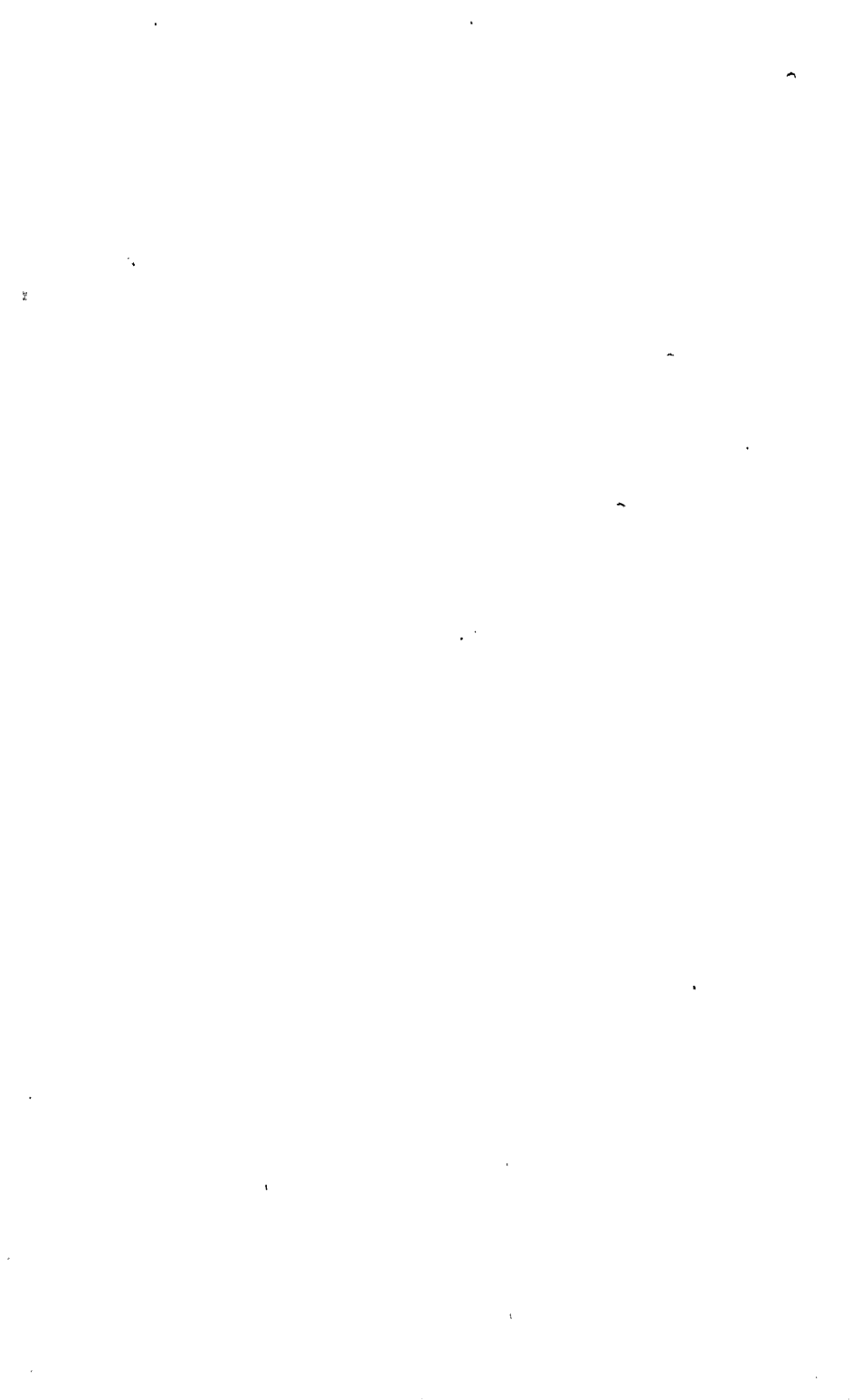
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# SPECIAL LIBRARY METHODS





# SPECIAL LIBRARY METHODS:

AN INTRODUCTION TO  
SPECIAL LIBRARIANSHIP

By

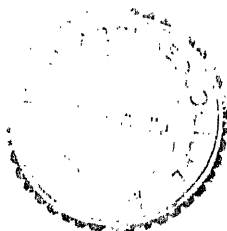
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*Librarian*

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AUTHOR OF "CATALOGUING IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES"

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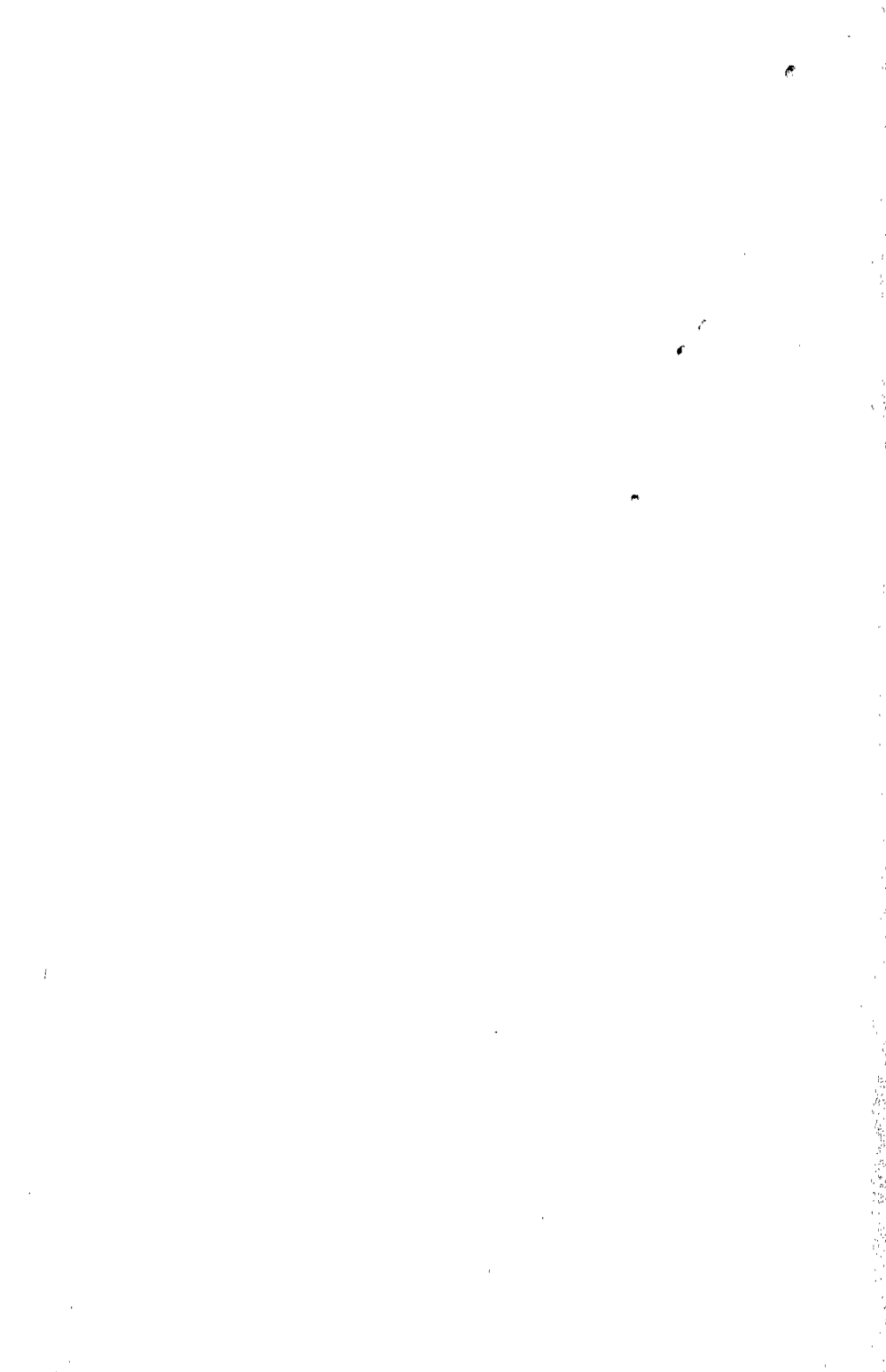
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TO  
MY WIFE



## PREFACE

THIS book is written as an introductory survey of special libraries in Great Britain, these being defined as "Libraries devoted to the use of special sections of the community." This definition is amplified in the first chapter, for it is suggested that an adequate explanation of the term 'special' as applied to libraries has not previously been given.

Special libraries have been seriously neglected by the profession, and literature on certain aspects of their work is scarce or non-existent. It is hoped that the surveys of each type of special library attempted in this book, together with the select bibliographies at the ends of the chapters, will assist readers to appreciate the essential differences between special and public library work. It is suggested that these outlines provide the requisite information for students of special librarianship, and also enable those engaged in other branches of librarianship to appreciate the value of these libraries.

I have had experience in medical, university, research and business libraries, and have endeavoured to present a true picture of the conditions in these special libraries. The state of affairs revealed is not always attractive, but it is believed that the improvement of these conditions will result from the introduction of an increased number of trained librarians into these libraries.

I have visited numerous libraries collecting material

for this book, and am indebted to the librarians of these for giving me information, and for permitting me to reproduce forms used in their respective libraries. Particularly I would mention Dr. W. C. Dickinson (London School of Economics), Mr. G. F. Home (Royal Society of Medicine), Mr. R. Hutton (King's College), and Mr. W. R. Le Fanu (Royal College of Surgeons). I am also indebted to the following for kindly lending blocks for the illustrations: Kardex Division, Messrs. Library Bureau (Plate I.); Messrs. The Shannon Ltd (Plate II.); Messrs. The North of England School Furnishing Co. Ltd. (Plate III.); the Royal Empire Society; the Royal Institute of British Architects; J. F. Smith, Esq. (Liverpool Public Libraries); and Messrs. Libraco Ltd. (Plate VIII.).

Many of the ideas expounded are contained in the articles mentioned in the bibliographies, and I have endeavoured to acknowledge these in the text wherever possible. I also thank Mr. J. D. Cowley for kindly reading the manuscript, and for giving me much helpful advice; also Mr. D. C. Henrik Jones and Mr. F. J. Cornell of the Library Association Library, for untiring assistance in tracing the literature of special librarianship. Finally I have to thank Mr. E. Clarke for assistance in the preparation of the manuscript.

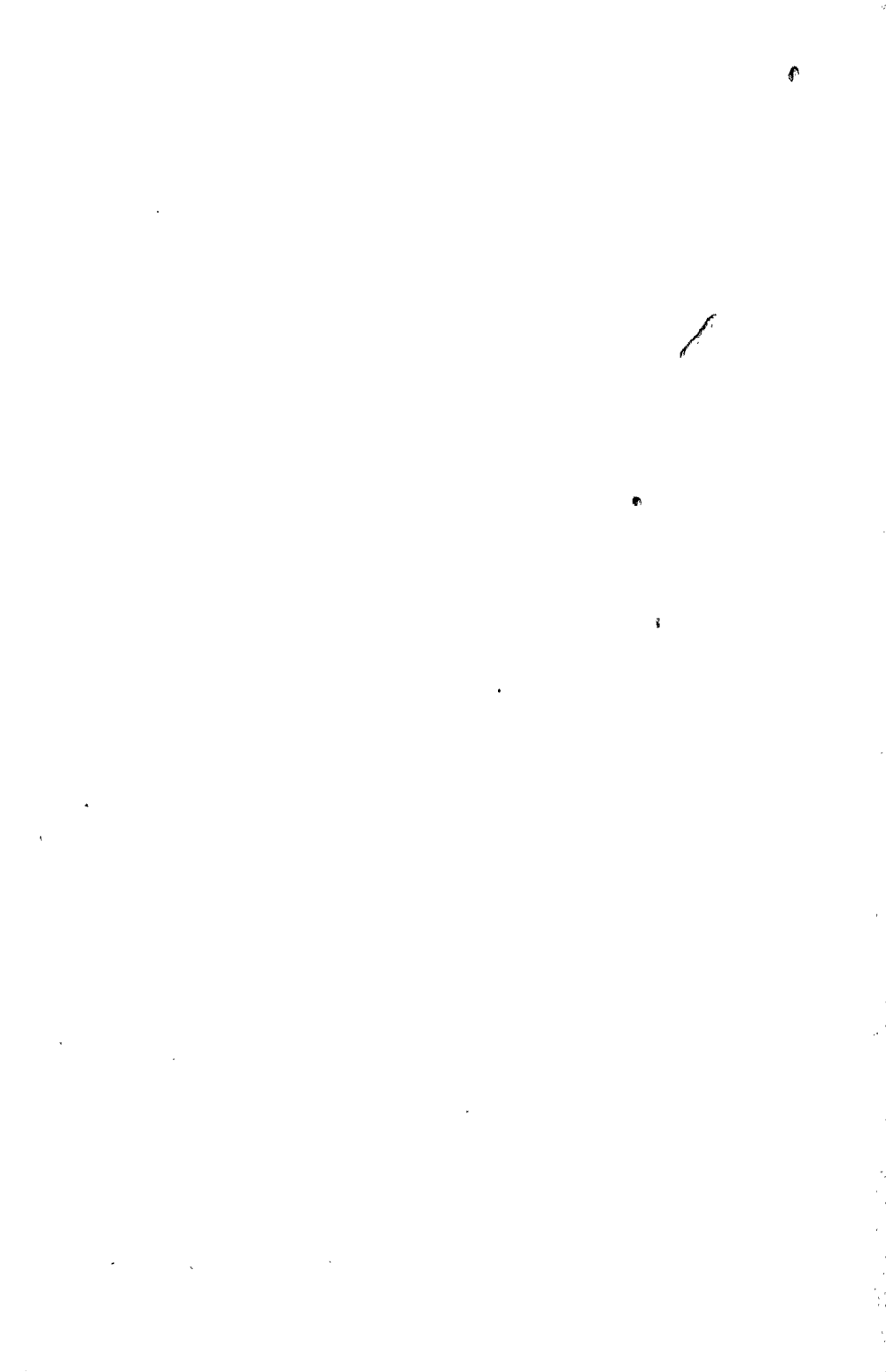
JOHN L. THORNTON.

WEMBLEY,  
*September, 1939.*

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## CHAPTER I

### SPECIAL LIBRARIES

*Learning hath gained most by those books by which the printers have lost.*

FULLER.

DURING recent years many attempts have been made to give a satisfactory definition of the term 'special' as applied to libraries. In most cases, the stock has been taken as the basis for classification, and libraries devoted to a particular field of knowledge are termed special libraries. Actually, most libraries specialise to a certain extent, many public libraries housing local collections, or containing sections particularly strong in local industries or notabilities, for example, and technical and commercial branches are happily becoming more common.

In these circumstances it is considered desirable to classify by function rather than by stock, and in this book all other than public and county libraries are considered, while commercial and technical libraries are treated as if distinct from the public system, for by their very nature they demand separate treatment. Similarly, university libraries are included, for they are considered as series of special collections, and their function is special although their stocks may embrace all knowledge and literature other than ephemeral

fiction. Thus, special libraries as treated in this volume include all other than those devoted to the use of the general public ; that is, those whose essential function is to provide for the needs of students, teachers, research workers, specialists, and members in the case of certain societies and institutions.

Very few special libraries confine themselves to one particular subject, for relative works and books on cognate subjects must be stocked, and the tendency is for the stock to become general. For instance, a geographical collection would probably include books dealing with travel, geology, climatology, cartography, oceanography, population and industry, anthropology and ethnology, among other subjects, in addition to physical, political and mathematical geography. Reference books, dictionaries and encyclopædias are also essential, and it is extremely difficult to define the limits of many subjects. Conversely, it is also true that public libraries tend to split up into special departments, and Mr. E. A. Savage (10)<sup>1</sup> advocates even more drastic steps in this direction for the larger library systems. He suggests that the reference library should be abolished, and the stock divided into subject departments under the control of specialist librarians, who would also be able to select books on their own subjects. This idea is highly to be commended, for it is impossible for one person to cover adequately the entire field of knowledge when selecting books, and assistance by librarians with a special knowledge of a

<sup>1</sup> Numbers in round brackets refer to the bibliographies at the ends of the chapters.

subject is of great value both to the library and its readers.

In view of these facts the term 'special library' is used throughout this work to indicate a library maintained to serve a section of the community qualified by interest in particular subjects, as distinct from public and county libraries where the general reader is catered for. Most special libraries are, strictly speaking, intended chiefly for the use of members of the institutions maintaining them, such as those in schools, universities, medical schools, and attached to learned societies and institutions, but co-operation has resulted in the pooling of resources, to the benefit of all concerned.

## II

Special libraries are of great antiquity, and date back to the foundation of the first library. When this took place is a matter for speculation, but the earliest records point towards Egypt and Assyria as being the homes of the first books. Egypt provides us with papyri dating back to several thousand years B.C., and the first book or written material announced the birth of the library.

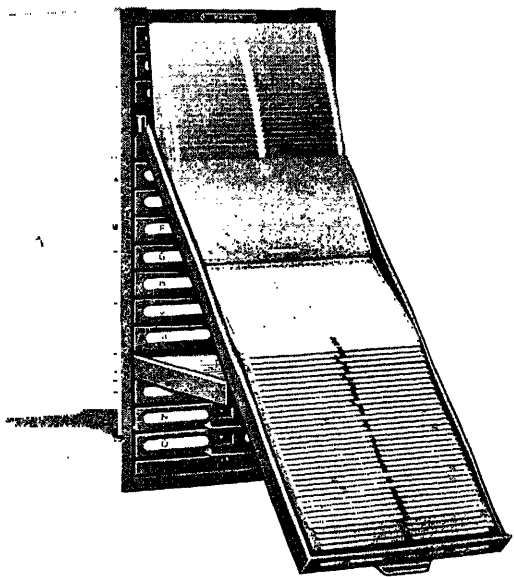
In these early times civilisation developed to a remarkable degree, and we are informed that libraries were attached to the palaces and to the innumerable temples scattered over Ancient Egypt. The literature was probably confined to religion, law, medicine and subjects useful to scholars, for the public was uneducated and not given access to the writings. The

priests were usually the librarians, and they catalogued, classified and administered the collections along lines similar to those followed to-day.

Books were considered sacred and were frequently buried with their owners, together with jewels, furniture and even slaves and cattle. The excavations of archæologists have revealed these treasures in a remarkable state of preservation in many cases, and from these, together with inscriptions on ancient buildings, a great deal of information regarding this interesting period has been obtained.

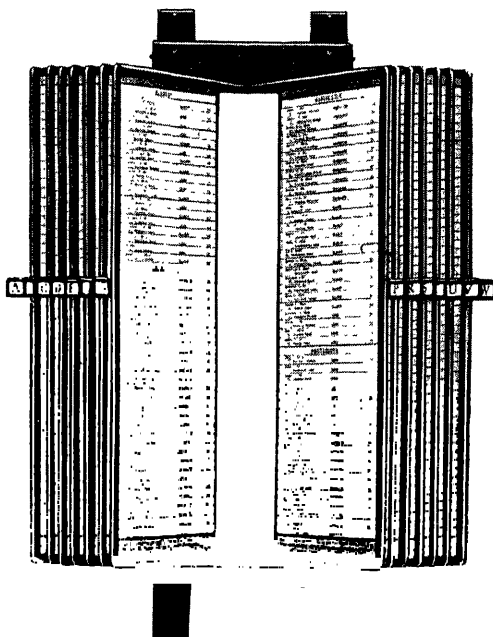
The Alexandrian Library was world-famous, being visited by eminent scholars of the period from all over the then-known world, but war frequently curtailed its work, and it was finally dispersed. Later, the extensive libraries of Greece and Rome, after a period of prosperity, were pillaged and the treasures destroyed. War, earthquake and fire have obliterated many ancient libraries, together with their contents, but it is believed that there are still many libraries in the Near East housing volumes dating from ancient times, but which are closely guarded. Travellers frequently return with rumours of the existence of these treasures, and it is highly probable that some of these rumours are founded upon fact.

There appears to be a gap between the Roman and Greek periods and the Middle Ages as far as libraries are concerned, but we know that the monasteries housed wonderful collections of manuscripts. The monks copied the scriptures, illuminating the parchment in many instances, and their libraries were well



### VISIBLE INDEX FILING SYSTEM

The above cabinet contains the cards shown on p. 15. These are widely used for checking the receipt of periodical publications, and are most useful records of information pertaining to this material.



### INTERLOCKING TUBE INDEX





stocked, but the dissolution of the monasteries resulted in the destruction of much of this material, while some of the more enlightened persons confiscated the collections to enhance the value of their own libraries.

The invention of printing resulted in the rapid growth of existing libraries, and the spread of education encouraged the formation of others, but public libraries as now established were not to be thought of until compulsory education ensured that the public could read the books provided.

Certain special libraries still in existence date back several centuries. Those attached to the older universities, such as Oxford, Cambridge, and St. Andrews, numerous cathedral libraries, and those belonging to the older learned societies, the Royal Society and the Royal College of Physicians, for instance, being examples. Generally speaking, such libraries have been much neglected until comparatively recent times, but many of them contain unique volumes, incunabula and rare items of bibliographical interest. Some of these treasures are still buried in obscurity, but it is to be hoped that those responsible for their safe custody will remedy this defect by permitting expert bibliographers to overhaul the collections.

### III

To-day, the formation of most special libraries is effected because of the impossibility of any library adequately to cover the entire field of knowledge. Specialisation results in more intensive collections of

literature devoted to the subjects covered, but very few libraries attempt to stock everything published, even on the smaller subjects. Book selection is of great importance in libraries of this type, for instead of merely collecting representative books on each subject, it is necessary to consider all the material covering the field, and frequently a specialist knowledge of the subject is required. In university and certain other libraries this is readily procurable, and the necessity for special knowledge does not imply that this qualification should be preferred to a thorough knowledge of librarianship in the custodian of the literature. A combination of the two is desirable, but librarianship cannot be acquired by specialists administering a collection of books, although trained librarians can learn much from the literature they supervise. Furthermore, in most special libraries the salaries paid to the library staffs do not tempt specialists in any field of knowledge ; for instance, for a medical man to be appointed full-time librarian of a medical library would probably be without precedent in this country, although many libraries of this type are effectively administered by trained librarians.

Special libraries should attract graduates in the subjects collected, after they have obtained suitable librarianship qualifications, but it is to be deplored that the salaries offered are meagre compared with the prospects of research workers and men engaged in other professions. Conditions are improving as the value of special libraries becomes more fully appreciated, largely owing to the efforts of the Library

Association and of the School of Librarianship, but there is still much room for improvement. Many library staffs are untrained, while the growth of certain libraries is hampered by the efforts of inefficient honorary librarians, and most special libraries are deplorably understaffed. It is impossible to obtain the best out of any collection of books without the assistance of librarians trained in bibliographical methods, and to appoint untrained persons in this capacity is to jeopardise the very existence of any active special library, where prompt, accurate, up-to-date information is essential.

With the advent of systems of co-operation, special libraries have increased in importance. They are invaluable to public libraries, and their own utility is extended by co-operation with libraries having similar objectives, for few libraries can afford to remain isolated and to satisfy their readers from their own shelves. Co-operation has resulted in a remarkable increase in efficiency in many libraries, and the value of special libraries to more general collections of literature is clearly demonstrated ; this aspect is more fully dealt with in Chapter VII.

#### IV

The administration of a special library differs widely in many respects from that of a public library. Intended for the use of specialists, the tools provided for the assistance of readers must be accurate, up-to-date, and must prove reliable guides to the literature.

Catalogues are essential in every library, but in special libraries they should receive particular attention. The demands of users should receive careful consideration, for it is a waste of time to provide catalogues that will never be consulted. If indexes would suffice, it is unnecessary to provide several types of catalogue.

Author catalogues are available in most libraries, but the dictionary form is not to be recommended in specialised collections. Author and subject, or author and classified catalogues are favoured, but in certain cases one of these can be replaced to advantage by an index. In commercial and technical libraries, for instance, it is frequently considered advisable to provide indexes to material that rapidly becomes obsolete, and must soon be discarded.

The detail to be found in catalogue entries differs to a great extent. Too many libraries catalogue all items as if for a bibliography, but in special libraries such detail is frequently unnecessary. Author, title, edition and date are essential, and the special requirements of individual libraries often determine the matter to be included in cataloguing entries. The presence of maps would be most useful to a student of geography, while rates of exchange, statistics, and times of the sailing of ships would be of vital interest in a commercial library. Similarly, the presence of illustrations and the nature of their reproduction would be included in entries for an art library, and each library must receive individual consideration. Accuracy should never be sacrificed with the exclusion of detail, for an inaccurate catalogue is worse than an incomplete

one, and no catalogue is incomplete if it meets the requirements of those for whom it is compiled.

Card catalogues are in use in most special libraries, for the advantages of this form are obvious in collections where up-to-date information is essential. The sheaf form is increasing in popularity, however, and is to be recommended if not liable to be subjected to hard wear, as in, for instance, university libraries. Printed catalogues of special libraries are of major importance as they frequently constitute exhaustive bibliographies of the subjects covered, but few libraries can afford to print catalogues of their entire stocks. Catalogues of periodicals and of special collections are sometimes issued in printed form by universities and the larger societies, but this form can only be adopted to advantage where the collections are permanent. These catalogues are maintained up-to-date by means of the card or sheaf form.

Certain libraries attached to learned societies publish lists of additions to the library in their respective journals. These often represent complete catalogue entries, and the lists are cut up, pasted on cards and filed to form the catalogues. The subject of cataloguing in special libraries is of great importance, and it has been dealt with in detail elsewhere by the present writer (13); the methods in use in the various types of special library are worthy of careful study by those employed in libraries presenting similar problems.

The adequate classification of special collections is extremely important, and is frequently rendered more difficult by the fact that the users of these libraries

usually know more about the subjects to be arranged than do the library staffs. A chemist, for instance, expects the subjects to be arranged in a clearly defined order, and the recognised schemes of general classification can rarely be adopted as they stand. Modifications and adaptations of these schemes abound, but in certain subjects the classification is not intensive enough for the arrangement of large collections of books on minute branches of knowledge.

The librarians of some special libraries have evolved systems applicable to their own collections, and among these the Barnard *Classification for medical libraries*, 1936, compiled by the Librarian of the London School of Hygiene, and the Cheltenham Classification, intended chiefly for use in school libraries, demand special mention. Other libraries, in the absence of a suitable scheme, remain unclassified, or the stock is arranged in broad subject groups, fixed location being the rule. There are cases where this latter method is justified; for example, where subjects must be split up into several collections, all housed in the same room, as instanced by the present writer (16).

A survey of the schemes of classification in use in special libraries reveals that Dewey is most popular, but that the Universal Decimal Classification is becoming more widely used in scientific libraries. This scheme receives fuller consideration in Chapter III. The Library of Congress scheme is employed in several university libraries, where it appears to give satisfaction, but the need for the reclassification of many special libraries is apparent (14-15).

The notation of a scheme should not be long or complicated if readers are allowed access to the shelves, and broken order should be introduced to bring relative subjects together if this is not effected in the scheme used. For example, it may be desirable to place philology next to literature, or sociology in close proximity to the historical section, and when classifying each book it is essential to bear in mind its value to users of the particular library, and to place it where it will be most useful.

Classification applied to books ensures that each volume can have only one place on the shelves, although the book may deal with several subjects, and it is necessary to provide adequate catalogues as keys to the literature. A book may be represented innumerable times in the catalogue, and either subject or classified catalogues are essential in every special collection, but may be replaced by indexes in certain circumstances.

## V

London is the home of a large number of special libraries, all types being well represented, but commercial and technical libraries attached to public systems are conspicuous by their almost complete absence. In fact Southwark boasts the only commercial collection maintained separate from the general stock, and it is to be deplored that there is no central library devoted to literature for the use of business men in this great metropolis. The individual boroughs find it impossible adequately to maintain these collections,



and it should be unnecessary to duplicate the books in every municipal library system, but a combined effort would result in a central commercial and technical library for the use of all interested.

The value of special libraries has increased with the growing annual output of literature, and particularly where libraries are grouped together, as in London, co-operation has resulted in beneficial results. In many instances this co-operation is no recent innovation, but has been in progress for many years, often unofficially. Librarians have worked in conjunction with each other, even loaning reference books when these are not likely to be required, and this generosity has proved of assistance to many scholars in search of information in this city.

The introduction of various processes of photographic reproduction is proving a boon to all special libraries. Those possessing the necessary apparatus can lend reproductions of articles in periodicals instead of withdrawing complete volumes from the stock, and can exchange facsimiles of rare material for desiderata. Libraries can build up their collections with reproductions of rare or unique material, for although still in an early stage of development, these processes are not expensive after the purchase of the necessary apparatus.

Several large libraries own photostat equipment by means of which pages of books, manuscripts, illustrations, maps and other material can be effectively reproduced both quickly and cheaply, and special libraries find it of inestimable importance when there is a great

demand for anything that cannot be allowed out of the building.

The use of ciné film in libraries is also becoming important. It is employed for making lantern slides, when it proves cheaper than the photographic plate, and requires less space for storage. Mr. E. F. Patterson (8) mentions its employment for photographing the plans of the arrangement of the bookstacks, the photographs being distributed to the heads of departments. He also suggests that the title pages of rare books might be reproduced photographically and included on cataloguing cards instead of the descriptions of the items, which appears to be an excellent proposal.

Recently there has been much research upon the use of microphotography in libraries, particularly in the United States, and in this country Mr. B. S. Page and Dr. L. A. Sayce in particular have proved capable exponents of this method of reproduction. There appears to be an urgent need for the standardisation of materials and methods (12), and as in most subjects, co-operation secures quicker and more satisfactory results than do individual efforts. Mr. Page (5) advocates the formation of a central copying service, and suggests that the National Central Library would be the ideal headquarters for this activity. Further details of this interesting process have been incorporated in stimulating articles contributed by the above writers to the *Library Association Record* (6-7).

## VI

Routine methods in special libraries are very different from those in public libraries, and are, in fact, often peculiar to individual libraries. This is largely due to the nature of the material collected ; for instance, in many libraries of this type, periodicals form a large percentage of the total stock, and are proportionately important. In other libraries the clippings contained in the vertical file are the most important feature of the collection, while maps, photographs, patent specifications and trade catalogues also demand special attention in many libraries.

Periodicals, particularly, are vitally important in university, commercial, technical, and business libraries, and the treatment of this form of literature presents many problems. The arrival of current parts is often checked by means of ruled cards bearing details of the journals, the cards being differently coloured to represent the periods of publication. These are often arranged on the visible index principle, and contained in steel cabinets or in loose-leaf form, although they are sometimes filed in boxes. The visible index filing systems consist of shallow metal trays in which the cards are filed flat (See Plates 1 and 2). The edges of the cards bear the titles of the periodicals and these are quickly accessible, and the particulars of the entries displayed by lifting the overlapping cards. These systems are also used for catalogues and numerous business purposes. Sample cards for use with periodical literature are shown opposite. Where prompt

Monthly

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OBTAINED IN EXCHANGE FROM

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**BOOKS RECEIVED**

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Power and Works Engineer. 116																
Monthly																

[Kardex.

PLATE I (opposite page 4).

When the drawer is open they appear as above, and full details of the entry are visible.

delivery of parts is essential, the most modern methods are preferable, for by means of a system of coloured tags, one can easily trace the belated journals without searching through the entire collection of cards.

The cataloguing of periodicals has been the subject of discussion for many years, and we appear to be no nearer the solution of the problem. The necessity for the standardisation of methods has been frequently stressed, and those taking part in the discussion appear to group themselves into those favouring the arrangement of the *World list of scientific periodicals*, and those against it. Dr. S. C. Bradford (2) and Mr. C. W. E. Leigh (4) contribute useful articles towards the elucidation of the problem, taking the second point of view, while Dr. Wilfred Bonser (1) and Mr. J. A. Wilks (18) favour the arrangement of the *World list*, and the paper by the latter suggests the cataloguing of all periodicals under their titles. This would appear to be an excellent idea, and the complications arising when publications of a society are entered under the town in which the society is situated, for instance, are pointed out elsewhere (13, Chapter XXII).

The storage of periodical literature frequently strains the resources of the smaller special libraries, for many journals appear at an alarming rate. It has been suggested that such material as is not likely to be required should be deposited with the local municipal library, and this is frequently arranged, while other libraries extract articles of special interest and arrange them with other clippings in the vertical file. This latter arrangement would not be economical when

dealing with highly priced technical and scientific journals, for many other libraries would gladly house the complete sets, but it is recommended for the type of literature that contains only occasional articles of interest to the library concerned, and which can readily be procured elsewhere upon demand.

## VII

Those engaged in special library work require special training, and although a technical knowledge of the subjects covered by the library can be acquired from contact with the literature, the training of potential librarians requires careful consideration. Both the Library Association and the School of Librarianship make certain provision for those engaged in special libraries, but it is considered to be insufficient. Such persons are handicapped when taking the examinations by the difference between methods in their libraries and those of the municipal collections. Cataloguing methods are different, the Dewey scheme of classification, so much stressed in the examination syllabus, is either unknown for practical purposes, or encountered in a very modified form; the aids to literary history, so important to the assistant in the public library who is in daily contact with them, are unobtainable, although the literature of the subject of the appropriate special library may be fully understood and appreciated.

The questions asked in the examinations mostly stress the methods of the public library, and those

beginning with "Outline the methods of . . . in your library," must be ignored because in many cases the question is either not applicable to special libraries, or the simple answer that would have to be given would not satisfy the examiners, who obviously expect to see public library methods described.

It appears that a complete separate course is necessary for those contemplating, or engaged in, special librarianship, this being supervised by those with a thorough knowledge of the relative problems. The School of Librarianship is making efforts on these lines under the direction of Mr. J. D. Cowley. Probably this is the result of proposals by the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, and particularly of the suggestions of Mr. A. F. Ridley (9), but the Library Association provides limited facilities for all other than those engaged in public library work. As a result, a large percentage of the staffs of university and special libraries are not members of the Library Association, and therefore do not take its examinations. It is not sufficient to condemn the employment of untrained librarians in this type of library, but steps should be taken to ensure that adequate training facilities are available. Probably the real problem is the diversity of methods in special libraries and the difficulty in fixing standards applicable to any group of libraries, but it is believed that much more could be accomplished in this direction than is attempted at present.

The staffs of each of the types of special library dealt with in the following chapters demand separate

attention. The problems of each group differ to a marked degree, but a course of instruction on special librarianship in which each group would be represented, is urgently required, and would result in the improvement of the education authorities concerned, and of the personnel of special libraries. The formation of another association devoted to the welfare of those engaged in special librarianship is unnecessary, for the profession would be seriously weakened by splitting its ranks, but the rapid development of special libraries and their increasing importance demand the attention of a virile branch, administered by trained librarians engaged in special library work. It is feared that if this is not formed by the Library Association, another association will evolve, such as that encountered in the United States. In that country special libraries are particularly numerous and probably the existence of two associations is justified, but the closer co-operation between all types of libraries can be more easily effected in this country by means of membership of a common association.

## VIII

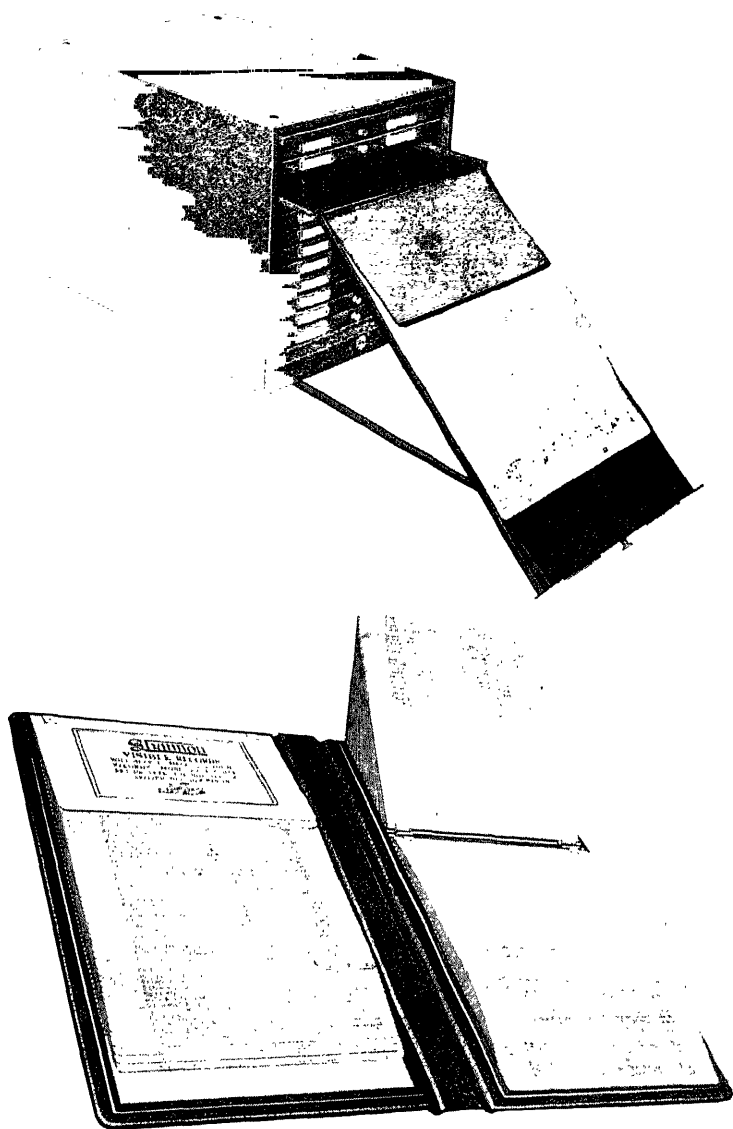
Special libraries are rapidly growing in Great Britain, and new ones are constantly being formed, particularly in businesses, but they are, comparatively speaking, still in their infancy. In many instances they have been handicapped by the lack of trained librarians, and particularly through lack of funds, but they are proving their worth, and we may look forward to



rapid progressive strides in the next few years. An increase in the number of trained assistants, the growth of co-operation, and the evidence of real value to those institutions where adequate facilities are provided, contribute towards this inevitable progress. But fresh problems are revealed daily, and only by contact with those facing similar difficulties can these be effectively solved.

The importance of special library work is becoming appreciated, and receives a certain amount of consideration, but progress can be hampered through apathy on the part of those primarily concerned. Special librarians should co-operate to establish themselves as a branch of the Library Association, for public librarians being in the majority, it is difficult for others to receive the attention and consideration due, both at professional meetings and in the professional press. The alternative is the formation of a separate association, and it is possible that the recently formed Society of Assistant Librarians in University Libraries may prove a step in this direction. There are certain disadvantages in being affiliated to the Library Association, and the existence of two separate bodies need not split the profession, but rather provide stimulation. The idea is chiefly the attraction of those who are not members of any association, and the co-operation of these assistants to their mutual advantage.

Many persons engaged in public library work fail to appreciate the problems of special librarianship, and look upon special library work as being a miniature of that encountered in public libraries, and propor-



VISIBLE INDEX FILING SYSTEM



tionately difficult. The following chapters attempt to survey the field of special librarianship, and to reveal it in its true light, that of a rapidly growing force which is daily becoming more important to scholarship and to the dissemination of knowledge in general.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

[The bibliographies at the ends of the chapters make no pretence to be exhaustive, but represent material studied during the preparation of this work. For further references readers are referred to the bibliographies of librarianship, and particularly to the *Year's work in librarianship*, published annually by the Library Association, and *Library literature*, edited by Marion Shaw, for American literature. The *Internationale Bibliographie des Buch- und Bibliothekswesens* is also useful.]

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## CHAPTER II

### UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LIBRARIES

*The true university of these days is a collection of books.*

CARLYLE.

THE value of university and university college libraries cannot be overestimated, as on account of the permanency of their collections, and in certain cases, owing to the great age of the foundations housing them, they represent remarkably complete collections of books covering the entire field of knowledge. It is considered incorrect to term these libraries 'general' libraries, although their stocks cover most subjects other than light fiction, for they are in fact collections of special collections, and their function being special, they demand recognition as special libraries.

To attempt to define ideals for organisation and routine methods in these libraries, or to describe any of these methods as being generally accepted is totally impossible, for they differ to an extraordinary extent. Each university library has its individual problems, and every librarian has his own ideas of solving them, while in many cases progress is hindered by the existence of customs dating back many years. The complete reorganisation of the older university libraries is a task

not to be lightly undertaken, but the results derived from this process at St. Andrews, for instance, fully justify the time and expense involved. The administration of these libraries along lines laid down many years ago is to be deprecated, but this state of affairs is frequently encountered in university libraries.

## II

In recent years, several of our largest and most ancient university libraries have become so congested that new buildings, or the extension of existing premises, have been necessary, and even where new buildings have not been erected, rearrangement has resulted in the reorganisation of the collections.

The Bodleian Library at Oxford has been cramped for space for many years, and being a copyright library it grows at a tremendous rate. A new building has been erected in close proximity to the older edifice, the former being intended mainly for storage. It will accommodate 5,000,000 volumes, and there is space for two hundred years' growth. In addition, carrels are provided for readers, which feature is becoming popular in modern research libraries. Further details of the building are provided by Bodley's Librarian, Dr. H. H. E. Craster (12-13), while an explanation of the preliminary plans is published in the *Library Association Record* (5). The Radcliffe (Science) Library, which is administered in conjunction with the Bodleian, has also been extended during recent years, and open-access has been introduced (1, 36).

At Cambridge, an imposing building has been erected to house the Library, the main feature being a central tower containing the book-stacks. The move of such an enormous library necessitated careful planning, and an interesting account of these preparations is given by Mr. E. Ansell (3). Plans, photographs and other details are provided elsewhere by the same writer (2, 4), and Mr. H. C. Stanford (34).

New buildings have been erected at Armstrong College (7), Swansea University College (8), University College, Southampton (31), and the building housing the Brotherton Library at the University of Leeds represents a well-planned example of a library building that might be followed with advantage. Dr. Richard Offor describes this Library, which includes a circular reading-room (22). The University College of the South-West at Exeter is being rebuilt, and is now nearing completion.<sup>1</sup>

Carrels are a feature of the new University of Liverpool Library (39), and are also contained in the new University of London building, the section devoted to the Library having been completed. Here again, the outstanding feature is a tower containing the book-stack, the shelves being of steel, and the building has become a land-mark, being readily visible on account of its height. The Library is described by Mr. R. A. Rye (32), but librarians should endeavour to visit it in order to appreciate fully its significance to library architecture and organisation.

<sup>1</sup> A brief note on this library, by Miss Kathleen E. Perrin, appears in the *Library Association Record*, 39, 1937, pp. 648-9.



At Manchester University a new Arts Library Building has been erected, having a capacity for housing about 300,000 volumes, and it is planned to make allowance for future extension (37).

Rarely do librarians have the opportunity to plan this type of library, for existing buildings must receive architectural consideration, but the co-operation of the librarian is essential in order to avoid waste of space, and to provide the necessary accommodation, of which he is the best judge. Frequently, existing premises are converted to library purposes, and the librarian should be consulted to ascertain requirements in the light of his experience. The Foster Court Science Library at University College, London, is an example of premises converted into a library to advantage. Mr. John A. Wilks (40) has described this Library, the main feature of which is a store in the centre of the reading-room, this being necessitated by structural difficulties.

### III

The furnishing of university libraries is little different to that of other libraries, but steel shelving is probably more common. In addition, the introduction of the Snead book conveyor, the Snead rolling stack, the Snead stack light reflector, the 'Bishop' reading lamp, and the 'Polecon' shelf light is noticed in certain progressive libraries, and all of these features are to be found at the London School of Economics (18). Further details of these innovations are provided

by Mr. B. M. Headicar (17), who is responsible for many improvements in library equipment.

One of the chief characteristics of university libraries is the presence of departmental, sectional, or seminar libraries. In certain universities these departmental libraries are not part of the university library, this being the case at Manchester, but in this instance the catalogue entries for books in all these libraries are included in the general catalogue (37). In others, the departmental libraries are administered entirely by the main university library, and this centralisation is to be commended. Duplication is to a large extent avoided, and readers can usually consult the volumes contained in any of the branch libraries. There are still many disadvantages where the libraries are scattered over the buildings in proximity to the appropriate departments, such as the necessary duplication of catalogues, and the impossibility of adequate supervision, but these are overcome with varying degrees of success in most university libraries. Seminar libraries are usually known as rooms in which lecturers meet the students, having to hand the appropriate books for the course. These books may be temporarily housed in the seminar room, the necessary signature or other token of responsibility being obtained from the lecturer. Carrels are also becoming increasingly popular, these consisting of small studies fitted with desks, chairs and shelves for the use of research students. Books in much demand by the student are kept in the carrel, but can be obtained by the librarian if not actually in use.

Central control of these branch libraries is essential,

even though certain of them may be of sufficient size to justify a staff of more than one person. The purchase, accessioning, cataloguing and classification of books should be centralised, primarily to secure uniformity, and this necessity is acknowledged in most university and university college libraries.

#### IV

The finance of university libraries presents a problem owing to the variation of procedure at different universities. It appears that in most cases the Senate reviews the recommendations of the Library Committee, the chairman of the latter usually being a professor who takes the business before the Senate. This system is preferable even though the librarian may be given a place on the Senate, a practice not as common as desirable. The librarian is usually the secretary to the Library Committee, and to the sub-committees, should these exist. In certain cases the Library Committee allocates the money to the faculties, this being divided proportionately, taking into consideration the importance of the faculty, the existing stock on the subjects covered, and often the attitude of the heads of the departments to the library. This latter is of great importance, for the balance of stock can only be obtained by the effective co-operation of the teaching staff, and any neglect on their part results in the unequal development of the subjects collected.

Faculty sub-committees are appointed to administer the funds allocated to them, and to make recommenda-

tions to the Library Committee if desirable. The librarian, of course, is present at the meetings, and if a large branch library under the control of a senior assistant is concerned, this person in charge should also be present at the sub-committee meetings. He will probably know more about the literature of the subjects concerned than does the librarian, and his presence prevents the necessity of the latter leaving the committee-room to consult his junior, as has been known to occur.

Financial details depend to a great extent upon the size of the university concerned, and Mr. G. Ellis Flack (15), in a most useful paper, suggests that an efficient university library can be maintained by an annual expenditure equivalent to 3.5 per cent. of the total university expenditure. This is certainly not a high percentage, and as seen in Table 1, several libraries reach this figure. It is probably a minimum, for very few university libraries receive the money they require either for book purchase, or for the payment of the staff.

Periodicals account for such a large proportion of the funds available for the purchase of literature, that some libraries spend more on this type of material than upon books. They are correspondingly important, especially in the scientific departments, but the high cost of foreign periodicals has been causing grave concern for several years, many libraries ceasing to subscribe to the more highly priced journals.

As a rule, it appears that a university library is expected to spend all the money allocated to it in

EXPENDITURE OF TWELVE UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LIBRARIES, taken from the *University Grants Committee. Returns from universities and university colleges in receipt of Treasury Grants. Academic Year 1936-7, 1938.* Reproduced by kind permission of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office.

	Number of Bound Volumes.	Salaries and Wages.	Books.	Periodicals.	Binding.	Sundries.	Total.	Percentage of Total University or College Expenditure.
Aberdeen .	260,900	£ 2,528	£ 1,287	£ 1,002	£ 554	£ 313	£ 5,684	4.1
Birmingham	194,300	3,514	2,146	1,187	516	136	7,499	3.3
Bristol . .	114,900	2,398	1,527	1,077	314	138	5,454	3.1
Edinburgh .	475,000	5,471	1,418	1,633	726	1,164	10,412	3.5
Leeds . .	200,400	4,549	1,612	1,298	803	417	8,679	3.1
Liverpool .	193,600	3,871	2,677	1,033	613	317	8,511	3.3
London . .	282,500	5,348	2,171	681	837	186	9,233	3.8
University College, London	254,100	3,833	1,777	1,186	773	386	7,955	3.3
Manchester .	372,200	4,289	3,291	1,981	1,016	229	10,806	3.8
Nottingham University College .	55,700	1,347	791	500	189	157	2,984	3.4
Reading .	69,700	2,170	1,610	511	270	65	4,626	3.6
Sheffield .	137,900	1,694	1,441	945	219	107	4,406	2.7

TABLE I.

the financial year, and that an excess of income over expenditure is likely to affect the grant for the following year. Possibly any excess is due to a faulty budget on the part of the librarian, and in certain instances there has been a hasty expenditure at the end of the year, such as the indiscriminate rebinding of volumes from the depths of the store, in order to balance the budget. This system is to be strongly deprecated, particularly where the money might be better expended upon the salaries paid to the assistants.

## V

The number of the students and the teaching staff of universities ranges from a few hundreds to as many thousands, and the library must provide seating accommodation for a large proportion of these. There is often a large reading-room for the use of undergraduates, and special departmental libraries to which research workers and those taking honours degrees have access. In certain libraries, at University College, London, and Leeds University, for instance, keys are supplied to those recommended for the privilege, but the tendency is for open access to become more general. The stores, which are essential in libraries where discarding is seldom resorted to, are usually closed to all other than specially privileged persons, but there is much to be said for complete open access. This results in cleaner and better-arranged collections, and although browsing is not always recommended for students, it has its merits.

Certain university libraries exist merely for reference purposes, but others allow books to be borrowed, usually for a limited period. Fines for overdue books appear to be necessary, and are normally higher than the twopence imposed by public libraries, perhaps amounting to one shilling per week. Very few libraries can afford to duplicate the textbooks to the extent demanded, and it is impossible to allow these books out of the building. This results in the formation of reference and lending stock, the former being housed in the general reading-room where possible.

The loss of books from libraries maintained in connection with teaching and research reaches gigantic proportions should adequate control not be imposed. In most libraries of this type, readers must pass through a common exit, or barrier, where books are shown to an attendant, and a suitable receipt left for library books. Also, attaché-cases and overcoats are debarred from the library premises, these restrictions being enforced at the London School of Economics, and at University College, London, as far as possible, but the scattered nature of the departmental libraries frequently makes complete supervision impossible. Thoughtless and careless persons are checked from illegally removing the books, but the habitual thief could only be detected by the searching of every person leaving the library!

## VI

Book selection in university libraries would appear to be simplified by the fact that experts in each of the

subjects are available, but in practice this is rarely the case. The heads of some of the departments may be zealous enough to suggest the books that they would like added to their sectional libraries, but apathy on the part of others results in an ill-balanced stock. Some librarians divide the subjects between the library staff, each member noting new publications on the subjects with which he is most closely connected. These suggestions are brought to the attention of the appropriate specialist, and this system is commended, for the library staff frequently know more about the literature of certain subjects than do those who teach them. Students and others are encouraged to make suggestions, preferably by completing suggestion forms available in the library, these forms being used to note complete details of the publications ; they are taken to the committee meeting by the librarian, and filed to form lists of books on order from the booksellers.

By these means all subjects may be covered adequately, for if one waited for recommendations from professors, many of the departmental libraries would never receive additions. Furthermore, the librarian cannot be expected to survey the entire field of knowledge himself, for he could spend most of his time on book selection alone, and those members of the staff in closer contact with the literature can more readily become acquainted with the subjects covered by the libraries with which they are familiar.

The accessioning of additions to the library is similar to the practice in public libraries, but certain



university libraries keep a separate book for donations, which are sometimes numerous. This separation should not be necessary, although for statistical purposes these additions may be required separate from purchases. Some libraries compile statistics of accessions, new purchases, second-hand purchases, number of volumes and works added, presentations, periodicals, books borrowed, books referred to, and other details probably of no value whatsoever. Others consider the compilation of statistics a complete waste of time, and continue with more important work. In certain cases these records are required by the committees, and Miss Marjorie Plant (29), outlines the various statistics compiled from accessions at the London School of Economics.

The provision of catalogues in university libraries demands special attention on account of the scattered nature of the books. A catalogue of the entire collection should be housed in the general library, perhaps in the catalogue lounge which is becoming a recognised feature in large libraries. This is usually situated in the approach to the library, a wide corridor frequently being utilised, and the size of the cabinets necessary to house the cards in most university libraries necessitates the provision of much space, preferably outside the reading-room.

The card form of catalogue is most common, although printed catalogues of university libraries are important, and are preferred by the academic staff. However, the cost of printing prohibits the publication of extensive catalogues in most libraries, although

catalogues of periodicals and of special collections are more common. Sheaf catalogues are gaining popularity, and where entries are arranged as units, many of the advantages of the card form are reproduced, but the use of the thin sheets by large numbers of students causes much wear and tear, constant replacement being necessary. Several libraries employ printed, card, and sheaf catalogues, the first for the older stock and perhaps for periodicals, the second keeping these up to date, and including all the new material added to the libraries, the sheaf form being used for periodicals or as a subject or classified catalogue.

Where branch libraries exist, catalogues of the books contained in each room must be provided in proximity to the stock, and cards for all books likely to be of use to readers in that library should be incorporated in the catalogue, although the books may be shelved elsewhere. If general open-access is not the rule, these books should be available upon application to the assistant-in-charge, or to the main library.

The provision of author catalogues only is now seldom met with, but certain librarians look upon other types with disfavour, possibly because unacquainted by experience with their merits, or more probably because the initial cost of compiling a classified or subject catalogue of a collection of many thousands of volumes is considered excessive. Mr. John A. Wilks (41) doubts whether subject catalogues are necessary, as students appear to get on very well without them, but even if this is the case, teachers and research staff demand consideration. Where the stock of a large

library is split up into sectional libraries and special collections, the overlapping of subjects must exist. Furthermore, when a large number of students require the same books, some of them must look for alternatives, and the subject or classified catalogue can prove of great assistance in their search. Members of the library staffs in contact with readers are frequently asked for "something else on the same subject," and without a specialised knowledge this is frequently difficult to trace, in the absence of assistance from the catalogue.

There is little point in providing classified catalogues if the stock is not arranged by one of the published systems of classification, and although the nature of many university libraries is such that the application of a recognised code appears difficult, this can usually be overcome. A few libraries of this type still adhere to fixed location, but others have recently undergone complete reorganisation, being classified according to an accepted scheme during the process. Several employ the Dewey system, or the expansion of this scheme now known as the Universal Decimal Classification, and the Library of Congress scheme is gaining popularity in libraries of this type. It presents many interesting features, making it the best of those under consideration for use in university libraries, but it should be moulded to the individual requirements of the library using it. Very few librarians can apply schemes of classification without adaptations and extensions, and although this is frequently looked upon with disfavour, it is doubtful if any system of classifica-



SKEAT AND FURNIVAL LIBRARY, KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON  
Example of a College Library furnished for use as a seminar



tion is entirely adequate for any library save that for which it is specifically compiled.

Mr. G. H. Bushnell (9) recommends that every college library should be classified, and the same is applicable to universities. At St. Andrews he has introduced the Library of Congress scheme, and finds it entirely successful applied to an extensive collection of books in one of our oldest and largest universities. Other librarians might follow the example set in this library to advantage, for many university libraries require urgent reorganisation rather than the extension and re-equipment of small sections, but the difficulties and expense of the process deter all but the most ambitious.

## VII

The question of library staffs follows naturally upon these remarks. It is a fact that all university libraries are grossly understaffed, very few of them having even one full-time cataloguer. This is a disgraceful state of affairs in libraries where valuable collections of books are housed, and which are so important in the education of students, to the research worker, and the scholar.

It is also true that the staffs are paid salaries that can only be termed such by a wide stretch of the imagination, for although it has been recommended that the librarian should receive professorial status and remuneration, in few universities is this an established fact. The assistants are even worse off, as grades frequently bar these from receiving more than a

maximum that amounts to about £150-£200 per annum. Increases in salary frequently depend upon the inclination of the librarian, who annually recommends these to the Library Committee, for fixed scales are often absent. Junior assistants receiving £52 per annum on appointment have been known to receive £75 after five years' service, during which time they have obtained professional certificates, and they can rarely hope to reach more than £200, even though in charge of large departmental libraries. The introduction of graduates, who perhaps have recently passed through the School of Librarianship, at a commencing salary of about £150 per annum, renders it difficult for those who have given long service but do not possess a degree. To place graduates in a senior position over them is unfair, and yet the introduction of grading systems frequently prevents assistants from occupying the positions carrying higher wages. To pay a graduate who performs duties of inferior importance most of his time a higher salary than an assistant in charge of an important branch library, where his specialised knowledge gained by experience is invaluable to readers, is an anomaly that should be remedied, for there is no doubt of its existence.

A graduate who has taken an honours degree in English, for instance, could be of great assistance to students taking the same course, but in most cases the graduate works behind the scenes, and the person coming straight from school is placed behind the counter to attend to borrowers. The graduate rarely deals direct with users of the library, and if he has

specialised in one subject, he possibly neglects the general education so important in a library covering the entire field of knowledge, and rarely has the opportunity to apply that which he has gained. In due course the junior assistant becomes of more value to the library, but being unable to receive adequate remuneration, he finds himself in a 'blind-alley' job. Advancement is impossible, situations in special libraries are scarce, and public libraries demand experience in their own type of library for the senior positions, although the reason for this is difficult to determine. Assistants have been known to forsake the university library, after several years' experience, for a junior position in a public library system, commencing at a salary that is probably little, if any, lower than they already receive.

The University and Research Section of the Library Association, in consultation with the Association of University Teachers, drew up the following scale of salaries for university and college libraries (33).

Grade A :	£200—£25	annually—	£400
„ B :	£400—£25	„	—£500
„ C :	£500—£25	„	—£650

Graduates, Fellows, and Associates of the Library Association are to be included in Grade A ; assistants with special responsibility, such as head of a cataloguing staff, or in charge of a branch library, in Grade B. The sub- or deputy-librarian is to receive the salary set out under Grade C, except in small libraries. Unfortunately there appears to be no means of enforcing these



scales, which would do much to improve conditions in university libraries. The annual increment of £25 is certainly an advance on the paltry £5 which is offered in certain libraries. The subject of salaries is, also discussed elsewhere (6, 24), for no librarian can be blind to a state of affairs that seriously hinders the development of the most important of special libraries.

Hours and conditions of service differ, but most of the libraries are open in the evening until eight or nine o'clock. The library staffs sometimes work alternate weeks in the evening, or the staff is divided up so that two persons only are on duty each evening. Duties are usually confined to routine, with little variation, and there is little interchange between assistants to relieve the monotony of constant attendance at the counter, for instance. This is largely due to understaffing, a deficiency which is the cause of much neglect in university libraries.

## VIII

Routine methods for the registration of borrowers and of issues differ considerably. In certain libraries devoted entirely to reference purposes, any person can use the reading-room without formality; other libraries require the production by the reader of his student's registration card, and usually intending borrowers have to complete forms in the library before borrowing books.

From these forms, guide cards are compiled bearing full details of borrowers, the cards being filed in

**PLEASE USE PENCIL** HAND THIS FORM IN COMPLETE IN DUPLICATE  
**AUTHOR** (In Block Letters)

ROOM

TITLE

CLASSIFICATION

ACCESSION No.

READER'S SIGNATURE

Received the above work

DATE

Room in which  
work will be used

THE READER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS WORK AS LONG AS THIS RECEIPT IS UNCANCELLED.  
 LIBRARY BOOKS MUST NOT BE DAMAGED OR MARKED IN ANY WAY

### BRITISH LIBRARY OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SCIENCE

BORROWER'S TICKET FOR BOOKS NOT ON SHELVES TO WHICH STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS.

The back of the ticket consists of carbon paper and this is hinged to a duplicate form, so that the reader duplicates his application.

alphabetical order. The tickets or forms signed by borrowers for each book are placed behind the guide cards, so that one can tell how many books a reader has in his possession. Another record indicates the borrower of any book or periodical, being an alphabetical list of these bearing details of the material, together with the name of the borrower and the date when borrowed. This record is often compiled by the reader when filling up the borrower's ticket, by means of carbon duplicates, and it saves the necessity for the library staff to copy every ticket. Where there is a limit to the period for which a book may be borrowed, it may be necessary to have a third register from which one can readily determine when books are overdue.

Readers are frequently allowed access to reference books, but where this is not the case, they are required to sign a ticket for this material. Where barriers have to be passed at the entrance to the library, tickets for books being removed are left with the janitor, who checks all books in the possession of readers. To facilitate this process certain libraries have every book marked on the spine with the library stamp.

The admittance of external readers is permitted in several universities, some requiring recommendations from heads of departments, or from the librarian of the local public library. Others allow non-members of the university to use the library upon payment of a deposit, perhaps of two guineas, and most librarians permit scholars in search of scarce material to consult it upon application.

## KING'S COLLEGE LIBRARY.

A separate voucher must be filled in (legibly and in ink) and deposited with the Assistant Librarian for each work borrowed.

No student may have in his possession more than three volumes at a time.

Books must be returned within fourteen days from the day of issue.

Reserved books and works of reference may not be taken out of the Library.

AUTHOR	TITLE	NUMBER OF VOLUMES	BOOK NUMBER

Date for return : \_\_\_\_\_

Name.....

Address.....

Registered College Number.....

BORROWER'S TICKET OF KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON. ACTUAL SIZE, 8" X 5".

The instruction of new readers in the use of the library is important, and should consist of something more than an hour's lecture to a large gathering of students by the librarian. The large number of students may make individual instruction impossible, and it has been suggested that instruction in the use of books should be part of the curriculum in all universities. Mr. Harold E. Potts (30) suggests that the modern universities gravely over-emphasise the importance of lectures, and advocates the introduction of bibliography as an integral part of university teaching for all students.

The library is one of the most important departments in every university, and it should be administered as such. The staff should consist of qualified librarians and the juniors encouraged to study for the professional examinations. Above all the chief librarian should be trained in librarianship, for a string of university degrees is no compensation for the lack of professional experience, without which no library can be effectively administered. To combine a thorough knowledge of librarianship with scholarship is an advantage, but a chief librarian can rarely pursue research in any branch of knowledge without detriment to his work, and it is his duty to put his best into the subject that he has adopted as his career. A chief librarian should acquaint himself with members of his staff, and there should be no social barriers between graduates and non-graduates, a form of snobbery that frequently exists.

## IX

The binding of periodicals and text books in university libraries is important, for they must be regarded as permanent stock. Buckram is recommended for most purposes, being durable and also cheaper than leather. The latter is frequently used for reference books, such as dictionaries, but with constant use it is often found that the covers prove too heavy for the paper, and the pages become loose. Canvas has also been advocated as a covering for this type of book, but it has little to commend it, while a good buckram stands wear, has a pleasant appearance, and is cheap.

Several university libraries have annual stock-takings, the libraries being closed for the purpose. In the larger systems, sections are overhauled at different times, so that there is always some part of the library open to readers, but the inconvenience caused hardly justifies prohibiting the use of literature for as long as a fortnight, as is sometimes the case. Stock-taking can be effected without this step being taken, the books on the shelves being checked by means of the shelf register, those absent being traced from the borrowers' register.

It is doubtful if the time spent each year on this process of stocktaking is justified by the results. All books are recalled, checked on the shelves, and a few noted as missing. If of importance and frequently asked for, this has already been noted, and if not, are they worth the trouble expended? Missing books

are rarely returned, for if the system is effective, only those deliberately stolen are removed from the library without signature. After the stocktaking inspection, borrowers rush to secure the books, the staff is overworked, the issues soar, and if statistics of these are kept, the librarian proudly displays the result to his committee.

## X

Donations frequently form important sections of the stock of a university library. Persons connected with the institution sometimes leave their collections to be added to the library, perhaps with sums of money towards their upkeep. Where these collections must be maintained apart from the general stock, as a memorial to the donor, their value is greatly diminished. If possible these collections should be distributed among the appropriate subjects, even if a separate catalogue of the collection, perhaps in printed form, is considered necessary to perpetuate the name of the benefactor.

Would-be donors should be impressed with the necessity for the allocation of gifts to the sections where they are most likely to be used, and an attempt should be made to overcome the restrictions imposed with legacies of bygone days. A gift of books on a special subject, or having an historical significance could be maintained in its entirety to advantage, but general collections would remain as mausoleums, especially if housed behind glass doors, or in parts of the library to which readers have not access.

Sums of money for the purchase of books are sometimes received as bequests, often to be spent on a certain subject, and if this is a stabilised sum it might be expended on the purchase of the more expensive periodicals, rather than the library grant for that subject reduced on account of the extra sum available. Non-recurrent grants, if not for a stipulated purpose, could be spent on strengthening the collection, filling in gaps in periodical sets, or the purchase of expensive sets and rare items.

In certain universities a proportion of the annual income is reserved for the revision of stock in one of the departments or of a special subject, and this scheme is recommended where certain subjects may tend to be neglected. It is in operation at University College, London, for the libraries devoted to the Arts.

Most of the older universities house incunabula, and have special fire-proof safes for the safe custody of this material. These foundations are worthy homes for rare books and manuscripts, for scholars can usually gain access to these upon application to the librarian.

Lantern slides, photographs, portraits, films, facsimiles and other material of use in the teaching of students must be provided for, these frequently being augmented by donations, as the purchase of them is not often considered to be within the scope of the library.



## XI

University libraries are rich in bibliographical material, and co-operation between these libraries results in the pooling of the literature, much of which is unique. Librarians exchange ideas through the University and Research Section of the Library Association, and the *Union list of the periodicals in the university libraries of the British Isles*, 1936, is one of the results of co-operation that is proving of incalculable value. The universities have loaned books to each other for many years, and the stocks of several of them are now open to a wider public through the efforts of the National Central Library.

University libraries permitting the public to have access to their stocks are allowed to benefit under the net book agreement, while those receiving grants from the University Grants Committee are entitled to receive a discount of fifty per cent. on publications of His Majesty's Stationery Office.

The stocks of the university libraries represent a large proportion of the literature of value to the scholar, and as permanent collections their value is enhanced. They should be administered by the most progressive library methods, and supervised by trained librarians; adequate funds for the upkeep of the literature and for the remuneration of adequate staffs are of vital importance, for without these essentials the collections cannot serve the purpose for which they are intended.

University libraries should not be graveyards for

the perpetual storage of literature, but should be equipped for the diffusion of knowledge, that the facilities offered by these valuable collections might be appreciated fully and used to advantage.

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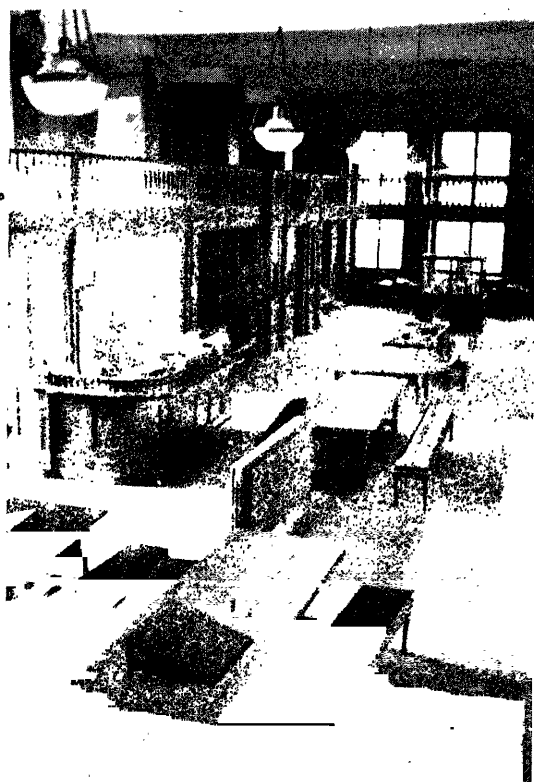
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ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL  
COLLEGE LIBRARY

This library is typical of several libraries attached to London medical schools. The alcoves and the surrounding balcony are representative, while the furniture dates from the opening of the library in 1879.



## CHAPTER III

### MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC LIBRARIES

*Books must follow sciences and not sciences books.* BACON.

#### I

#### GENERAL

THESE libraries fall naturally into three groups, those attached to medical and scientific societies and institutions, medical school libraries, and the collections maintained for the use of research workers in institutions devoted entirely to research purposes. As these types differ to a considerable extent both in function and the nature of their requirements, they are separately considered in this chapter.

In certain respects, however, they agree, the most important being the common demand for the latest information as quickly as possible. Research workers must know the extent of previous work in their subject, and must keep abreast of modern experiments both at home and abroad. This emphasises the need for extensive sets of periodicals, and their selection, accession and filing are of great importance in libraries attached to institutions where research is carried out.

No library can afford to take every periodical



covering its field, and the enormous number of journals devoted to the sciences and to medicine must be carefully sifted for the most important from the point of view of individual libraries. Certain periodical publications must be taken by every library devoted to medicine and science, but co-operation facilitates the selection of the more expensive foreign journals. Mr. C. C. Barnard (2) has published a paper containing tables showing the most used periodicals at the London School of Hygiene, covering a period of several years, and also the use made of the older volumes, with the average use per volume. His useful article indicates the fact that certain periodicals taken regularly are rarely used, while others not stocked are frequently borrowed from other libraries. This stresses the fact that the co-operative purchase of periodicals would prove of advantage to many libraries.

Unfortunately the selection of periodicals for purchase is rarely made by the librarian, but depends to a large extent upon the heads of departments. It is curious to note that a journal considered to be of vital importance to one person studying a subject, would be disregarded entirely by another expert in the same field. This 'fashion' in literature results in incomplete sets, these having been discontinued through a change in the staff, and also frequently means that an expensive periodical is taken solely for the use of one person.

The co-ordination of the stocks of libraries devoted to the same subject, housed in close proximity to each other, as in London, for instance, would result in a

much more intensive service for all concerned, and money that is now practically wasted would be spent upon material having real value to those participating in the arrangement.

The Science Library lends from its extensive stock of periodicals and books, covering the wide field of pure and applied science, to all approved scientific societies and institutions, and certain medical libraries collaborate to their mutual advantage, but librarians are often hampered by the attitude of their committees, which appear to lack the foresight necessary to envisage the true value of co-operation, in the purchase of literature as well as the loan of this material.

## II

The selection of books for medical and scientific libraries demands a special knowledge of the subjects covered. The appointment of experts with special qualifications as librarians is rarely possible, mainly owing to the low salaries paid, and a trained librarian is preferable should it not be possible to combine the qualifications.

A person thoroughly trained in librarianship quickly becomes acquainted with the literature under his supervision. He knows what to look for in the text books covering the subjects collected, and becomes familiar with the authorities in the field. He will quickly appreciate the periodical literature containing authoritative reviews, and his selection to be presented at the library committee meeting can be supplemented

by suggestions from the experts. The latter can rarely be relied upon to make the entire selection themselves, and the librarian, in closer contact with the literature and with the readers, is often better equipped for the purpose.

In London, several of the libraries classed under the heading medical and scientific, subscribe to a circulating subscription library. The smaller libraries, having little money to spend, rely to a great extent upon this system, for books can be frequently changed, and even the largest medical library in London subscribes on a large scale to this system. Books that are constantly in demand can be duplicated, and borrowed works temporarily replaced by this means, while students are keen personal supporters of the movement.

Both medical and scientific libraries are in need of guides to new books. Publishers' catalogues and advertisements are frequently misleading, to say the least, and it has been suggested that the Science Library should publish annotated lists of new publications (8). The *Weekly bibliography of pure and applied science* issued by this library is of great value to those interested in the subjects covered, and an authoritative guide to new books would be appreciated.

Abstracts of periodical literature are important, but few devoted to the subjects under consideration are really effective. They appear months after the material abstracted, for instance, and overlap to a marked degree. The bibliographies published periodically by the Science Library are very useful and up to date, but the subjects to be considered under the term

science are infinite. Chemistry itself is covered by several abstracting periodicals, notably *British Chemical and Physiological Abstracts*, and *Chemical Abstracts*, to mention only two, while the *Subject Index to Periodicals* and *Biological Abstracts* are examples of more general periodicals containing scientific material.

Medicine is almost entirely without an effective bibliographical journal, for the *Quarterly Cumulative Index Medicus* published in the United States, as its title implies, is published at intervals of three months, and although its value is great, it would be enhanced by more frequent publication. Surely we might have an English periodical devoted to this important subject, for although certain special journals contain abstracts of articles of particular interest to their readers, there is a real need for a general survey of medical scientific and clinical literature? The best printed catalogue of medical books and reprints is also American, and is incidentally the finest existing example of a printed dictionary catalogue. The *Index Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon General's Office, U.S. Army*, familiarly known as the *Surgeon General*, represents the catalogue of the largest medical library in the world. One volume is issued every year, each containing a small section of the alphabet, and the series is invaluable to librarians of medical institutions.

These tools are in great demand for the compilation of bibliographies, this frequently forming an important part of a librarian's task, and the tracing of references is almost impossible without the aid of these guides to the literature. It is important for the librarian of

any special library to make himself acquainted with the bibliographies of his subject, carefully noting the nature of the material contained therein, and its possible value to his library. Such knowledge can only be gained by experience, but once acquired it enhances the importance of the librarian to his readers, for no printed guide can take the place of personal advice and assistance.

### III

Classification is important in every library, and in libraries containing large collections of books on special subjects, this importance is stressed. Fixed location still exists, and in libraries where open-access has not been introduced, as in certain medical school libraries, for instance, it is justifiable, but the value of finding relative subjects adjacent necessitates the adoption of a recognised scheme of classification. The Library of Congress and the Dewey systems are employed to a certain extent, but of recent years the Universal Decimal Classification, or Brussels expansion of Dewey, has been recommended for general adoption by most medical and scientific societies. Professor A. F. C. Pollard and Dr. S. C. Bradford (3-4, 15-17) in particular have proved capable exponents of its virtues, and it certainly appears to be the most significant of published schemes, although it is far from perfect. Mr. Jason Lewkowitsch (11), criticises it as being illogical, inflexible, too largely open to error, and because it can only be used by experts. It is also believed that the method of publication of the English

edition, sections being issued over a number of years, will seriously influence its popularity, for by the time that publication is completed and the index issued, the earlier portion will be entirely out of date (19).

Miss J. Chapman (6) points out that twenty-two institutions issue periodical publications classified by this scheme, and to libraries using the system, the publication of reprints, and of sheets bearing bibliographical details of papers, complete with classification numbers, are very useful.

Among the libraries classified by the Universal Decimal Classification may be noted the Science Library, the Pharmaceutical Society, the British Postgraduate Medical School, and the Royal Society of Medicine, but it is very difficult to employ the scheme in its entirety for the classification of books. The notation is too long, and too complicated for the use of those other than experts, but it can be applied to a large collection of pamphlets on special subjects, to advantage. This has been done in the Thane Library devoted to the medical sciences at University College, London, but the research workers do not consult the material themselves, being assisted by the library staff.

At the London School of Hygiene an excellent scheme of classification is in use, having been devised by the librarian, Mr. C. C. Barnard. The *Barnard Classification for medical libraries* presents carefully worked-out schedules, is flexible and comprehensive, and although it stresses parasitology and tropical medicine to a marked degree, owing to the nature of

the institution for which it was compiled, it can be adapted to the use of any medical library.

Medical and scientific libraries are of vital importance in the education of students, and in the promotion of research, but they rarely receive the attention due from the institutions in which they are housed. The library staffs are frequently untrained in librarianship, are numerically inadequate, and invariably grossly underpaid. The annual financial allowance of these libraries is often small compared with that of the teaching and research departments, but the library is of importance to *all* of these departments, and should be maintained accordingly.

Many of these libraries function in an inadequate manner owing to these restrictions, but there are indications that those responsible are beginning to appreciate more fully the vital importance of literature, and the necessity for the supervision of trained librarians. Money spent on the provision of these facilities is not wasted, but invested, and although the dividends are not always visible, they exist in the time saved by those in search of information, and the value of assistance from a person having a thorough knowledge of the literature.

## 2

### LIBRARIES ATTACHED TO MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES

The libraries classified under this heading are usually attached to societies and institutions supported

by subscribing members, several of these libraries dating back many years. The Royal College of Physicians, for instance, was founded in 1518 by Thomas Linacre, and the collections of books are important owing to this fact. They are also permanent, and form very complete libraries of the subjects covered, and being used by experts, they contain the most authoritative literature procurable.

Nominally confined to the use of members, these libraries frequently serve as information bureaux, and at the Royal Society of Medicine, for instance, bibliographies are prepared, translations made, photostat copies produced, and books lent by post, to the requirement of those subscribing to the Society. The bibliographies consist of lists of references, together with abstracts, and these are filed in steel cabinets according to subjects. These headings are taken from the *Quarterly Cumulative Index Medicus*, and one copy is housed in the reading-room, while the other is reserved for the use of the staff in connection with postal enquiries.

These societies often publish journals to be circulated to members, which are sometimes utilised to inform readers of new additions to the library. In certain instances the lists of accessions comprise complete catalogue entries, which may be cut up and pasted on cards to form catalogues. The publication of these periodicals is of further value to the library, for there is the possibility of exchanging these for requisite material; furthermore, certain



# Royal College of Surgeons of England.

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## STUDENT'S APPLICATION FOR TICKET OF ADMISSION TO THE LIBRARY

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*Name* .....

*Address*.....

We the undersigned, Members of the Royal College of  
Surgeons of England, and Teachers at.....  
Hospital, recommend that Mr.....  
be allowed to read in the College Library.

.....  
.....  
*Date* .....

N.B.—Tickets are granted to Students on the understanding that they will only use the Library to study books not elsewhere accessible to them.

EXAMPLE OF APPLICATION FORM BY WHICH THOSE NOT OTHERWISE  
QUALIFIED TO USE A LIBRARY CAN BE INTRODUCED BY MEMBERS.

societies place in their libraries copies of books sent for review.

Printed catalogues of these libraries are sometimes issued for the benefit of members living at some distance from the headquarters of the society, these catalogues being maintained up-to-date in the journal circulated to members. In the library, the printed catalogue is usually supplemented by the card form, and where printed catalogues of complete libraries have not been issued, sometimes lists of periodicals are published. The Royal Society of Medicine has published such a list,<sup>1</sup> which probably represents the most complete collection of medical periodicals in this country, and the Royal College of Surgeons of England has issued a similar catalogue.<sup>2</sup>

The arrangement of the books on the shelves according to a recognised scheme of classification is not as frequently encountered as might be, for many of these libraries are administered as when they were founded. The Royal Society of Medicine has of recent years adopted the Universal Decimal Classification, which appears to be appreciated by the readers, but others remain arranged under broad subject headings, in the absence of an ideal scheme for these libraries. Probably the most necessary qualification of any method of classification for libraries where the advancement of knowledge frequently necessitates the

<sup>1</sup> Royal Society of Medicine. *List of the periodicals in the Library*, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> *List of the transactions, periodicals and memoirs in the Library of the Royal College of Surgeons of England*. Second edition, 1931.

extension of the schedules, is regular, periodical revision, and this is not encountered in any of the recognised schemes.

## II

The policy of these libraries, as of most libraries, is governed by a committee, the librarian preparing lists of books for consideration, in co-operation with members, and acting as secretary to the committee. Sometimes he is given authority to purchase immediately upon publication certain books of particular importance, perhaps after consultation with the chairman of the committee, and this is advantageous where the committee meets at long intervals.

Certain of these libraries are maintained solely for reference purposes, but where members are situated throughout the country, subscribers not residing in London may desire to borrow by post. This is a normal part of the routine of several libraries, dozens of parcels being dispatched daily, the borrowers usually being expected to refund the postage when returning the borrower's form enclosed with the books.

Issue routine in the library itself is similar to that in other special libraries, a form bearing the details of the book together with the borrower's signature being deposited with the librarian ; duplicate copies of these particulars are obtained by means of carbons in the case of books borrowed for home use. Many libraries allow members access to the stock with-

out formality, and this is preferable to the system requiring a signature for every book to be used in the library, especially where members are known and the exits controlled.

*This Card Admits*

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to the LIBRARY of  
**THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND**  
for the term of Three Months from the date hereof.

.....day of.....19.....

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*Librarian.*

On expiry of this ticket, application must be made for its renewal if the holder wishes to retain the privilege of reading in the Library.

CARD ADMITTING STUDENTS TO THE USE OF THE LIBRARY FOR  
A LIMITED PERIOD.

Reading-rooms must be provided, seating accommodation being dependent upon the possible number of readers using the library, and there must also be a stock of standard reference books. Certain rare material, incunabula, engravings, etc., may be reserved solely for use in the library, and some libraries do not allow readers to borrow periodicals, or restrict this to those published more than five years.

## ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE

1, WIMPOLE STREET, LONDON, W.1

I have received the following :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Date.....

Signature of borrower.

RECEIPT TO BE SIGNED FOR BOOKS SENT BY POST.

## ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE

1, WIMPOLE STREET, LONDON, W.1

Please return to the Library the following  
book(s) which has/have been borrowed over a  
longer period than that allowed by the Library Rules.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Books can be renewed for a further period on application, unless  
required by another Fellow.

CARD USED FOR RECALLING OVERDUE VOLUMES.

## III

Too often these libraries are supervised by an untrained staff, or the acting librarian is hampered by the existence of an honorary librarian with no knowledge of librarianship. Probably an expert in a special field, an honorary librarian can be of great assistance in the selection of books, but his activities are rarely confined to this sphere.

The full-time untrained librarian builds up an excellent knowledge of the subjects covered by his library, and he can find his way among the literature, being dependent upon his memory, but he does not exist indefinitely. A newcomer, in the absence of up-to-date organisation, is bewildered by the apparent chaos, which has been sorted out only in the mind of his predecessor. This unsatisfactory state of affairs is improving, but several large libraries still continue the policy formulated at their foundations, and their value to readers is accordingly diminished.

## 3

## MEDICAL SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Medical schools are attached to several of the more prominent universities, and in London, where the larger hospitals are grouped in close proximity, they are particularly numerous. Speaking generally, the libraries housed in these schools have been very much neglected. Supervised by the untrained hands of either clerical assistants or honorary librarians who are members of the teaching staff, they have existed as

mere accumulations of text books and periodicals in a state of absolute chaos.

Some of them are still little better off, but of recent years their importance in the education of medical students has begun to be appreciated, and the appointment of trained librarians has resulted in the complete reorganisation of the collections. At the London Hospital, St. Thomas's Hospital, and more recently, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, great improvements have been introduced, although one of these still labours under the disadvantage of having an honorary librarian; the latter supervises an assistant having had many years' experience in medical libraries, and with librarianship qualifications. At least one London medical school library still has no librarian, and in others, outside London, the medical school is supervised by the librarian of the adjacent university library, but in most cases their size and importance demands the attention of at least two persons on the staff. To curtail the hours of opening because there is only one member of the library staff is to seriously affect the function of the library.

## II

The financial affairs of these libraries differ considerably. None of them receives adequate funds for books or for the purchase of periodicals, and the salaries paid to the librarians are extremely low. The figures given in column 2 of Table 2 indicate the joint sum paid to staffs often consisting of two and even



ROYAL EMPIRE SOCIETY LIBRARY





EXPENDITURE OF TWELVE LONDON MEDICAL SCHOOL LIBRARIES, taken from the *University Grants Committee. Returns from universities and university colleges in receipt of Treasury Grants. Academic Years 1936-7, 1938.* Reproduced by kind permission of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office.

	Bound Volumes	Salaries and Wages	Books	Periodi- cals	Binding	Sundries	Total	Percentage of Total Expendi- ture	Number of Full- time Stu- dents	Annual Expendi- ture per Student
Charing Cross . . .	4,400	£ 114	£ 48	£ 2	£ —	£ —	£ 164	3.1	107	£ 1.53
Guy's . . . . .	16,900	334	211	261	95	103	1,004	1.6	990	1.01
King's . . . . .	6,200	218	22	10	10	5	265	2.1	221	1.2
London Hospital . . .	8,700	286	72	115	115	25	613	1.5	489	1.25
London School of Medi- cine for Women . . .	5,700	162	102	50	17	—	331	.8	372	1.89
Middlesex . . . . .	4,600	216	44	172	35	184	651	1.3	421	1.55
St. Bartholomew's . .	15,100	358	74	104	52	10	598	1.1	836	.72
St. George's . . . . .	6,300	259	58	21	15	1	354	6.9	105	3.37
St. Mary's . . . . .	6,000	310	84	24	10	17	445	1.7	413	1.08
St. Thomas's . . . . .	10,500	205	158	45	36	10	454	1.3	473	.96
University College . .	30,500	253	93	167	34	13	560	1.3	315	1.78
Westminster . . . . .	3,800	—	20	2	1	9	32	.7	136	.24

TABLE 2

three members, but it must also be considered that the Table is based upon material for the year 1936-7. St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College, for instance, has since improved the salary of the librarian, and it must also be taken into consideration that certain of the items represent non-recurring expenditure due to the reorganisation of these libraries. In certain cases the book fund is much higher than the normal annual grant for this purpose, and in others the binding expenses are unduly high, this work having been previously neglected.

It would appear that the grants for library purposes, compared with the total annual expenditure of medical schools, are very low. When considered in terms of pounds per student this is accentuated, for in Table 2, part-time students, and teaching and research staffs are not considered. Actually the figures provided are slightly misleading at a glance, for it must be remembered that the medical school having the smallest number of students should spend most per head, because certain expensive reference books and periodicals must be purchased, whether for the use of one or fifty persons. This fact shows the figures in a different light, for they must be considered in relationship with each other. A library with eight hundred students might take the same periodicals as one with two hundred students, and also stock the same reference books, but text books would have to be duplicated to a greater extent. The library staffs might be numerically the same (except where branch libraries exist, in which case at least two assistants should be

provided for every library), so that the salaries would differ only to a minor degree. A small library does not necessarily imply less work, or less expenditure, than in a large collection of books, and staff salaries should not be based upon the number of volumes housed.

It is suggested that the library is of at least the same importance in the education of students as any teaching department, that is, if the library is properly equipped and administered, and it should receive adequate consideration as such. The success of any library depends primarily upon the librarian, but he is frequently hampered by having insufficient funds at his disposal, or by the attitude of heads of departments. A librarian appointed because of his qualifications for the work should be entrusted with the complete administration of the library, the library committee outlining the policy and acting in an advisory capacity.

### III

The older medical school libraries appear to be planned on similar architectural lines. In London particularly, the large reading-room with an encircling gallery is popular, and accommodation for students and books is increased by the introduction of the alcove system. Where large numbers of students are trained it is necessary to provide seating accommodation for a correspondingly large percentage, this amounting to as many as two hundred chairs in certain instances.

Many of these old buildings are ill-lighted, and heating arrangements still include coal fires. Other relics of the past persist, but are gradually being super-

sed by more modern methods, although closed access is still common.

Where large numbers of students, many of whom are only temporarily at the hospital, are allowed access to books in libraries where supervision of exits is impossible, serious losses must result. Medical books are expensive, and sufficient duplicate copies for all

## ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL COLLEGE LIBRARY

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AUTHOR

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TITLE

---

Date	Reader's Signature
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**Books must not be removed from the Library.  
Please return books to the Librarian's Desk after use.**

EXAMPLE OF READER'S TICKET TO BE SIGNED FOR EACH BOOK  
REQUIRED, IN A MEDICAL SCHOOL REFERENCE LIBRARY.

readers cannot be provided. Of course, the books are not stolen, but simply removed until after the examinations, and then the 'borrower' is afraid to return them for fear of detection. This is more frequently encountered where books may not be borrowed from the library, and the loss, perhaps amounting to only ten pounds per year, is a very serious matter to the small libraries. Precautions are taken against theft in most libraries, but short of searching every reader,

no person can be prevented from illegally removing a book should he make up his mind to steal it.

The stock of these libraries must consist of text books for students, advanced special books for research workers, together with periodical literature. In addition, most medical libraries house collections of reprints and pamphlets, these frequently avoiding the necessity for the removal of periodicals from the library. The teaching and research staffs often use the libraries of the medical societies to which they belong, these being able to purchase more of the expensive books than are the medical school libraries. In London, for instance, the British Medical Association, the Medical Society, the Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Royal Society of Medicine house excellent collections of medical books for the use of members.

Cataloguing in these libraries should be as simple as possible, the barest details being included on the cards. Author and subject entries are indicated, the two being filed separately. It is essential that the latter type should be arranged in chronological order under each subject, so that the person in need of the latest information, and also the historian, may be catered for. Printed or stereotyped lists of periodicals are sometimes issued, these being of special value to the research staff.

The classification of books behind glass cases is unnecessary, arrangement in broad subjects being the rule, and even should open access be adopted, it is frequently necessary to split up the books into groups,

making classification by one of the recognised schemes impossible. For instance, books by persons connected with the hospital housing the collection are frequently contained in special cases, and collections donated must often be shelved without being absorbed into the existing stock. It is also sometimes necessary to maintain sections for advanced students, and it is always advantageous to have the most used volumes nearest the issue desk, especially where the books are in locked cases.

#### IV

Medical school libraries are supervised by library committees consisting usually of representatives of all the teaching departments. The librarian is often the secretary of the committee, but this is not always the case. Similarly, he may pay the library accounts, this work may be effected in the accounts department of the school, or the library may have a treasurer, who is also a member of the library committee. Whatever the system, the librarian is expected to prepare the agenda, submit lists of recommended books, and supply information at the committee meetings. The library committee authorises the purchase of books, equipment, etc., but matters requiring the expenditure of larger sums of money than available in the library grant are referred to the medical school committee.

Library committees function extremely well when the members have a real interest in the library, but antagonism sometimes threatens the development of the collection. Some persons delight in disagreeing

with any suggestions put forward by the librarian, or by another member of the committee, while others attempt to confine expenditure to the benefit of their own departments. Librarians can sometimes prevail upon a small committee, the absence of certain members assisting the process, and frequently the repeated appearance of a subject finally results in its treatment to the satisfaction of the librarian. Funds for library purposes are extremely low and those departments sharing in its expenditure numerous, so that the librarian has difficulty in the collection of an adequate, balanced stock.

Small committees are preferable to large ones when the funds for disposal are strictly limited. Most individual members of a committee will discuss every item on the agenda, the time spent being disproportionate to the sum of money involved, and although the expenditure of funds is particularly important where these are inadequate, it is considered that a committee of not more than six members can more effectively deal with the matter than one of double that number.

Routine methods are similar to those in other libraries. Books are accessioned, the arrival of periodicals carefully checked, and binding effected as expeditiously as possible. Buckram is preferable for the latter purpose, being both cheap and hard-wearing, and the binding of periodicals, and the rebinding of text books are important matters. Most libraries have a crest or emblem bearing the name of the library stamped in gold at the base of the spine of every book, this being effected to discourage theft.



Certain of the libraries attached to medical schools have branch libraries, these being in proximity to the departments where pre-clinical subjects are studied. This arrangement exists at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College, but it is essential that the routine work should be centralised. Ordering, accessioning, cataloguing, etc., should be done in the main library, which should house a catalogue of the complete collection. Where a medical or scientific library exists as a branch of a university library, however, it must receive the consideration due to specialisation, and its individual problems should be studied. To provide a medical library with an author catalogue only, merely because the university to which it is attached labours under this disadvantage, is intolerable, for the requirements of a library devoted to scientific research are very different from those where the most recent information is not so important.

These libraries are still in the developmental stage. They have successfully resisted the advance of progressive methods of librarianship until recent years, but are beginning to show signs of advancement towards the complete reorganisation that is necessary before they can function adequately.

### 3

#### LIBRARIES ATTACHED TO RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Libraries housed in institutions devoted entirely to research purposes are similar in many respects to those maintained by certain businesses. They are main-

tained solely for the use of the staff, collecting only the literature of special importance to the advancement of their research, and the vital necessity is to be thoroughly up-to-date.

Research workers must know what has previously been done in their subject, and bibliographies are very important in the library. Those published periodically receive special consideration, and the presence of good bibliographies in books or articles in journals should be noted in the catalogue. Some of these libraries make analytical entries for all articles of interest to them in the periodical literature, and issue abstracts for the use of the staff. Others circulate the current journals among the research staff, who mark the articles they desire to be catalogued or indexed.

Catalogues are of primary importance in these libraries, but the entries should be as brief as possible. Only details of value to the readers need be incorporated, and either subject or classified catalogues must supplement that devoted to authors. If indexes suffice, one of these catalogues should be discarded, but the requirements of users must receive due consideration.

Certain of these libraries exist as information bureaux, the librarian, being a specialist in the field of knowledge covered, supplying information from the literature. In these instances, indexes only are advocated, but it is obvious that a trained librarian would manage the library more effectively than could a person interested solely in a branch of research.

Periodicals, being vehicles for the conveyance of

the latest information, are more important than text books, although certain standard reference books must be stocked. The prompt receipt of journals must be ensured, and the storage and binding of this type of literature is an important consideration. Occasionally the required articles are cut out and treated as pamphlets, but this is not economical with highly priced periodicals. Pamphlets are sometimes included in catalogues distinct from the books, although this is rarely considered necessary. They may also be indexed by authors, readers being referred to the accessions book for further details, and this system is employed at the London School of Hygiene.

The arrangement of pamphlets, and of books on the shelves may be by broad subjects, although in specialised collections it is preferable to classify the material by one of the recognised schemes of classification. The Universal Decimal Classification is probably the most useful scheme, while the *Barnard Classification for medical libraries* can be applied to medical libraries to advantage. If the research staff have access to the literature, as is most probable, the shelves should be well guided and an explanation of the scheme of classification in use, and a plan of its arrangement in the library should be displayed. Personal assistance from the librarian will further assist readers to acquaint themselves with the system.

## II

The library staffs of research libraries are small, but the necessary specialist knowledge of the literature

makes it important that a qualified librarian be appointed, for to obtain the most out of a small, specialised collection, requires the full-time attention of a person skilled in librarianship. To permit a 'live' collection of books to be superintended by a clerical assistant, or a part-time honorary librarian, is a false economy where the advancement of knowledge depends so much upon an appreciation of the work of others.

Research libraries concentrate on the presentation of the latest information as quickly as possible to the persons interested, and the value of a librarian is enhanced if he has the interests of his readers in mind. He can draw their attention to literature from obscure sources, that may be of interest to them, and the true value of a research library is the utmost that a librarian can abstract from a collection of books.

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## CHAPTER IV

### LIBRARIES OF LEARNED SOCIETIES AND INSTITUTIONS

*The ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of the martyr.*

MOHAMMED.

IN this chapter it is intended to consider libraries attached to learned societies and institutions, and those devoted to the subjects vaguely known as the 'arts.' These libraries are usually supported by subscriptions, endowments, grants, and donations, and are normally confined to the use of members, although the generosity for which librarians are noted, frequently extends the privilege to all in search of information. Students and those engaged in research are frequently welcomed to take advantage of specialised collections, especially where these contain material not to be obtained elsewhere.

Most societies and institutions have collections of books for the use of members, but they are not always entitled to the designation 'library.' To be really effective they should be administered by trained librarians, and too many special libraries rely upon inferior labour for the supervision of the books. Some of these libraries containing valuable collections are buried in obscurity because they are inefficiently controlled, and scholarship in general is the poorer.

The more progressive libraries are of great service to the advancement of knowledge, and those lending their books through the National Central Library have ensured the success of the interlending system.

The special features of these libraries must be taken into consideration for organisation and routine purposes. The nature of the stock, size, permanency, probable growth, and the requirements of readers must all be taken into account if one would obtain the utmost from any collection of books. In a library devoted to the fine arts, the importance of illustrations and processes of reproduction is stressed, and this should be noted during the compilation of the catalogues. Folio books will be more numerous than in most libraries, and shelving accommodation must be arranged accordingly. A geographical library will contain a large number of maps, perhaps sufficient to necessitate the provision of a separate section for this material, as at the Royal Geographical Society, where the map collection is open to the public.

In a library devoted to botany and horticulture, the dates of publication of the earlier books are most important. The terminology depends upon priority of publication, and at the Royal Horticultural Society much useful bibliographical work has been accomplished to affix dates to early botanical works. Books published in parts over a long period present the greatest difficulty, but as terminology influences the classification of books and also the classified or subject catalogue, this research is important.

## II

Most of these libraries are housed in old buildings, in premises ill-fitted for library purposes, although of recent years certain of them have removed to more commodious buildings, or have been rebuilt. Notable among these are the Royal Empire Society (9) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (3), the latter in particular presenting features worthy of study by all librarians.

The majority of these libraries provide reading-rooms, periodical-rooms, sometimes rooms for special subjects, and stores which are so necessary where discarding is rarely resorted to. Members are allowed access to the books without formality, but those desiring to borrow books for home use must sign the appropriate forms. Non-members are sometimes expected to be recommended by a member, or be introduced by a well-known personality, but frequently the only formality is the writing of one's signature in the visitors' book, and even this may be dispensed with.

Cataloguing must depend to a large extent upon the probable use of the catalogues. In most cases, author, title, edition, and date are the only particulars of any real value, but details of plates, photographs, maps, plans, bibliographies, etc., must be included where these will be appreciated by readers. In printed catalogues particularly, these details must be incorporated, for readers not having access to the actual books will consult the catalogue, and must be pro-

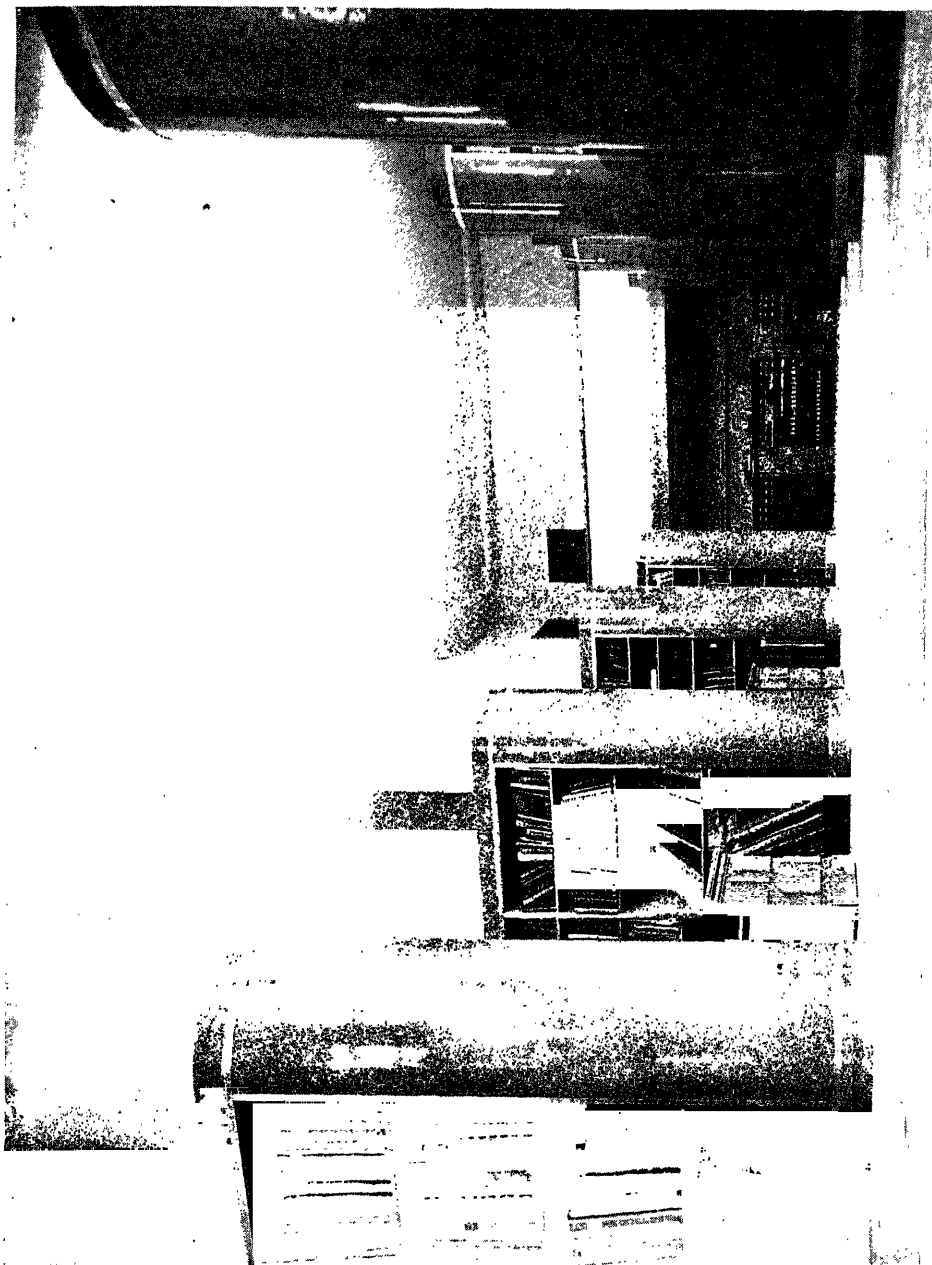


vided with all information necessary to give some idea of the value of the literature.

Printed catalogues of these special libraries are invaluable, because they represent unique collections on specialised subjects. The Royal Empire Society has issued a catalogue<sup>1</sup> which is arranged geographically and then chronologically. The four volumes already published cover Africa, Australia and New Zealand, Canada and the West Indies, and India and the East respectively. A fifth volume is in preparation. The entries are very full, making the catalogue of great value to those interested in the subjects covered, and a useful bibliographical tool for librarians. The Royal Institute of British Architects also publishes a printed catalogue of books and manuscripts, volume one, 1937, being devoted to authors, while the second volume, published in 1938, consists of classified and alphabetical subject indexes. These two monumental publications are examples of carefully compiled catalogues forming very complete bibliographies of the subjects covered by the respective libraries, and their value as such is inestimable.

Where printed catalogues are published it is necessary to maintain them up-to-date in card or sheaf form, and several societies print lists of recent additions to the library in the journal circulated to members. These lists of accessions represent complete catalogue entries, and may be cut up, mounted on standard size cards, and filed to supplement the printed catalogue.

<sup>1</sup> *The subject catalogue of the Library of the Royal Empire Society, formerly Royal Colonial Institute.* By Evans Lewin, 1930-38.



ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS LIBRARY

The rounded ends of the cases contain the heating units, and flood-lights directed to the ceiling



The Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Royal Horticultural Society adopt this method, which does much to standardise entries.

For use in the library itself, the card catalogue is most popular. Always up-to-date, its other merits are not eclipsed by the disadvantages of bulk and the high cost of card cabinets, and its advantages over the printed book form are obviously those that really matter. A printed catalogue of any 'live' library is out of date upon publication, and although of value as a bibliography, it does not truly represent the stock of the library after it leaves manuscript form. Sheaf catalogues are increasing in popularity, but are not recommended if liable to hard wear.

Catalogues of sections of these libraries, such as lists of periodicals, or select bibliographies, are common, and the preparation of the latter is an important part of the routine in many special libraries. These may be compiled at the request of readers, or of subjects having special significance to users of the library. The Victoria and Albert Museum Library issues bibliographies of certain special subjects, in stereotyped form, these being maintained up-to-date by means of cards. The Royal Empire Society has published several valuable bibliographies, and the Librarian, Mr. Evans Lewin (7), gives details of information that should be incorporated in these lists, suggesting that the subject form, with an author index, is preferable to other arrangements. In the same article he outlines the field of bibliography concerned with the British

Empire, and gives details of the catalogue of the Royal Empire Society.

The arrangement of the stock in these libraries is frequently on the fixed-location principle, especially in the older libraries, but others have adopted one of the recognised schemes of classification. In certain instances, schemes have been evolved specially for the collections, that by which the Royal Empire Society is classified being an example. Arrangement is by geographical headings, subdivided by subject, and the following is an example of the schedules of this interesting scheme :

62	Canada		
62 C	„	History	
62 C I	„	„	Early to 1759
62 C 26	„	„	„ Quebec Act

The notation is simple, and the scheme works well in a library devoted mainly to historical and geographical literature.

At the Warburg Institute, the classification scheme of the Prussian State Library is employed, the special class for a book being indicated by three capital letters, and its position within that subject by Arabic figures. The first letter refers to the general subject, the other two dividing it into sub-classes and historical divisions of period or country. The scheme is flexible, and of great interest ; Dr. Wind (10) provides a full explanation of its application at the Warburg Institute. The scope of this interesting library is “ the tracing of Greek and Roman tradition in post-classical civilisation ” (2),

which provides such a large field of literature that the stock might almost be termed general. Originally a private library, this collection is open to all serious students, and is an outlier library of the National Central Library, where a duplicate copy of its catalogue is deposited.

### III

Periodicals are frequently of great importance in these libraries, and their prompt receipt is essential. They are sometimes circulated to members engaged in special research, or important articles brought to the attention of those interested. If the society publishes a journal, abstracts may be included as a regular feature of this organ, or published as separate lists. The Victoria and Albert Museum Library issues a stereotyped monthly list of additions to the Library which includes abstracts, and represents a very complete bibliography of material relating to art. The Royal Geographical Society publishes as a supplement to the *Geographical Journal*, a list of additions to the Society's Library, entitled *Recent geographical literature, maps and photographs*. This is a most complete bibliography of geographical material, and of vital importance to all libraries housing the literature of this subject.

Where large libraries specialise in certain material, the experience gained from the administration of these large collections should prove advantageous to the libraries housing that material to a lesser degree. For example, the experience of the Royal Geographical Society in dealing with maps could be studied to

advantage by all libraries where these are stocked. Mr. G. R. Crone (4), the Librarian of the Royal Geographical Society, provides us with some useful information on the cataloguing and arrangement of this material, and many libraries could reap the benefit of much experience with this important material by the perusal of his article.

The collections of Oriental literature at the Royal Asiatic Society and the India Office amount to thousands of items, and the administration of this material is rendered even more difficult by the numerous dialects encountered in the literature. Experts in the various languages must prepare the catalogues and deal with the storage of the material, and the printed catalogues of the India Office Library prove valuable guides to all who administer collections of Oriental writings. The India Office Library is the oldest and largest specialist Oriental library, having been founded by the Directors of the East India Company (1). Its stock is unique, and the value of its catalogues to scholars, and to librarians dealing with similar material, cannot be overestimated.

The stock of a library devoted to the arts does not quickly become obsolete, as does that of a scientific research library, for example. The oldest literature dealing with the fine arts is still useful, and modern publications supplement rather than supersede former works. This makes it necessary to house permanently these collections, discarding rarely being resorted to, and the value of many of these libraries lies in their exhaustiveness. Some libraries carefully select the

best books on the subjects collected, and by means of co-operation with neighbouring libraries, pool their resources to the extent of avoiding the duplication of expensive periodicals and monographs. Lack of financial support usually renders this selection necessary, although the larger libraries attempt to be exhaustive.

Many libraries maintained by societies having an official journal, supplement their stocks by means of review copies of books and periodicals sent in exchange for their own organ, and much expense is saved to these libraries. Gifts of books, and donations of money further increase the stock, but collections should be split up among the existing stock, if possible, rather than maintained as separate accumulations of books, for these tend to divide the value of a library by splitting the subjects into numerous sections. The provision of adequate catalogues is some compensation for this arrangement, but it is advantageous to have all the books on a subject together on the shelves, for otherwise classification is rendered ineffective.

The Library Association Library is an example of an attempt at exhaustiveness. The nucleus of an excellent collection of books on librarianship has been gathered together at Chaucer House. There are numerous omissions, but an attempt is being made to secure the required books, either by donation, or purchase in the case of books still in print. Books sent for review to the *Library Association Record* are automatically added to the Library before being sent to the reviewers, who must return the volumes when



finished with. Exchange periodicals further supplement the stock of the Library, which is becoming one of the foremost libraries devoted to librarianship. The Information Bureau maintained in close connection with the library, enhances its value to members, who are entitled to use the Bureau, consult books in the library, and have volumes sent for home use.

#### IV

In certain instances, these libraries require supervision by experts in the subjects collected, but a combination of this special knowledge and a thorough acquaintance with modern library technique is desirable. Libraries specialising in Oriental literature must have expert linguists on the staff, and rarely are these trained librarians. Many of the libraries under consideration are staffed by persons with little knowledge of modern library methods, and we find such anomalies as arrangement by accession numbers in libraries that should set an example in progressive librarianship. Several of the Government departmental libraries employ obsolete methods in the administration of their collections, and few libraries of this type are staffed by trained librarians.

The obvious remedy for defects in any library system is the employment as librarian of a person thoroughly acquainted with the problems of his calling. To promote a person from another department to the librarianship of an important library, or to engage a person solely on account of academic

qualifications, is seriously to endanger the reputation, and hinder the development, of any collection of books sufficiently co-ordinated to deserve the name library.

Libraries attached to learned societies and institutions can prove beneficial to the general public through inter-library co-operation, and can themselves benefit by this system. They cannot exist independent of other libraries, for the increased demands upon all special libraries make it impossible for even the largest adequately to satisfy these demands. Of recent years co-operation has grown to a great extent, but as far as special libraries are concerned, it is only in the infancy of its development. Speaking generally, these libraries still lead a self-centred existence, supplying books from the shelves, or sending borrowers away unsatisfied if their requirements are not stocked, and having little intercourse with other libraries. This state of affairs must disappear, and steps in the direction are being taken by those libraries which, realising their own limitations, become outlier libraries of the National Central Library.

There is a great future for these libraries, for they have specialised stocks that are invaluable to scholars, and have only to be organised along recognised lines to be worthy of the societies housing them. Certain societies have invoked the assistance of the municipal libraries, they themselves lacking the funds necessary to appoint a trained librarian, while others house their collection at the local public or university library, that their literature may receive adequate consideration and

treatment. The amalgamation of the libraries of societies with similar objectives is another method of solving the problem of lack of sufficient financial support, and a special collection, however small, may be important to a large number of readers.

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## CHAPTER V

### BUSINESS, COMMERCIAL, AND TECHNICAL LIBRARIES

*That writer does the most who gives his reader the most knowledge and takes from him the least time.* COLTON.

THESE three types of library have much in common, and their treatment together is justified by their close relationship. In all of them, the main object is to provide the latest information as quickly as possible, and the stocks must be maintained strictly up-to-date. Discarding is frequently resorted to and the mobility of the stock is one of the most important considerations in these libraries.

Business libraries are specialised commercial libraries. The latter embrace the entire field of commerce and cannot stress the industries of every individual firm in the neighbourhood, so that progressive firms must maintain libraries for the use of their own staffs. The objective of every business library is clearly defined, being the advancement of the business of the firm to which it is attached, and the field covered is limited by the firm's activities. The library may be largely used as an information bureau, but the supervision of a trained librarian is necessary to obtain the utmost benefit from the literature. If possible, an information officer might be appointed, working in

conjunction with the librarian, and the co-operation between technical and bibliographical experts should result in the maximum of usefulness.

Commercial libraries are established for the benefit of the buyer and the person marketing the goods. Information on the sources and nature of raw materials, methods of management, means of transport, costs, markets, agents, tariffs, contracts open, fairs and exhibitions, machinery sales, new companies, new legislation, processes and designs, must be provided, and these particulars must be the most recent procurable.

The technical library serves the manufacturer, and the relationship between the maker, the seller, and the buyer merits consideration. In several municipal library systems, commercial and technical libraries are combined for economy of administration, saving staff, space, and stock. A large proportion of the literature is of interest to readers using both types of library, and although the combination of the stocks is not always recommended there is no doubt that their separation necessitates much duplication.

In smaller library systems these departments are housed in the reference library, and readers are given the benefit of the valuable stock contained therein, but where possible it is advantageous to provide separate premises, or at least a special room for the use of business men. The literature will demand different treatment to that housed in a general reference library, and the value of commercial and technical libraries lies chiefly in time-saving.

In addition to the departments attached to public

libraries, technical libraries are housed in most polytechnics and technical institutions, and in all these libraries the local industries must influence the stock to be housed, for the curriculum of a polytechnic is probably influenced by the industries of the area in which it is situated. Demand must be catered for, rather than a representative stock built up, and this individual specialisation by districts is an important consideration.

## II

The history of commercial and technical libraries does not go back far, for although a few were in existence in pre-war days, it was the economic distress during and immediately following the Great War that gave impetus to this movement for the assistance of industry. During that period the Library Association, realising the necessity for the establishment of depots where the business man could obtain the latest authoritative information, formed the Technical and Commercial Libraries Special Committee, which did much towards the establishment of these libraries. The *Library Association Record* for the years 1917-20 contains numerous references to the activities of this committee, and the writings of Messrs. L. S. Jast, S. A. Pitt and E. A. Savage remain useful propaganda for the establishment of commercial and technical libraries. The removal of the penny rate in 1919 further assisted the formation of these indispensable branches, and the libraries, previously crippled by lack of funds, strengthened the sections devoted to the use

of business men. The dates of opening of the commercial sections of the larger library systems indicate the importance of these factors ; viz. Glasgow 1911, Liverpool 1917, Bradford 1918, Birmingham, Dundee, Leeds and Manchester 1919, and Bristol 1920.

Libraries attached to businesses are of even more recent date. In this country they are still much rarer than they should be, but in the United States, thousands of businesses have recognised the great advantage of these specialised collections of literature. No progressive business can ignore the services rendered to commerce and industry by carefully selected collections of literary material, administered by trained staffs, and an increase in the number of business libraries is assured. They show no monetary profits, but frequently save firms vast sums of money, and have proved their worth where introduced.

The Library Association assisted at the birth of technical libraries, but has since neglected their existence. The original committee devoted to the welfare of them no longer functions, and there is little recent information on the development of commercial and technical libraries. In common with other special libraries, they receive totally inadequate consideration, and their expansion, function and progress have been hampered by lack of stimulus.

London is in a particularly sorry plight with regard to commercial and technical libraries. None of the boroughs is sufficiently equipped financially to provide adequate facilities for business men, and there is no co-operative effort for the formation of a central

library for this purpose. The recently opened commercial library at Southwark is the only one of its kind in the metropolis, and although the British Museum, the Patent Office, the Guildhall and the Science Library are invaluable to those in search of technical information, they do not take the place of a centrally situated library administered solely for the benefit of the manufacturer and industrial expert.

### III

The scope of each library depends upon the industries of the surrounding district. Local industries must receive primary consideration, and in newly formed libraries it is necessary to base the initial stock upon the selection of an expert, and to add those volumes for which there is a demand. To anticipate demand is often impossible, but it should be met as quickly as possible, and local processes and methods should be studied in an attempt to evaluate material. The technical requirements of a district are clearly defined, but to select the best from the numerous publications issued must depend to a great extent upon those thoroughly acquainted with the literature. It is usually impossible to collect everything published on any subject, and the aim of a librarian must be the selection of the best, having in mind local demand. Co-operation with neighbouring special libraries will prevent excessive duplication of expensive publications, and a wider field can be covered.

The selection of books is accomplished with the



assistance of technical experts, but librarians soon know where to find authoritative reviews and abstracts. The prompt purchase of books is essential, and new editions of standard works should be obtained immediately upon publication. Mr. A. D. Roberts (53) in his recently published *Guide to technical literature*, 1939, provides a most useful guide for librarians and technicians in his classified arrangement of the literature of a much-neglected subject. Literature can also be obtained by exchange or as gifts, and if a bulletin is published, exchange matter may be supplemented by review copies of books. Business firms advertising in periodicals will receive voucher copies, and in all commercial and technical libraries, a large amount of valuable free material can be acquired.

Periodicals are important, and even the advertisements in these may be worth preserving. Prompt receipt of the numbers as published is essential, and in business libraries these are sometimes circulated to members of the technical staff. Useful articles are noted, and are catalogued in the library. If the periodical is later discarded, the useful matter is extracted and treated as cuttings. It is almost impossible to house complete files of all periodicals taken, but the most important ones may be bound. Certain business libraries house back volumes of journals in the local public library, and most municipal libraries welcome these if they have sufficient storage space.

In many libraries, articles in periodicals are abstracted, usually by an expert in the subject covered, and the abstract circulated to those interested, either

in the official bulletin or as separate weekly features. This is necessary owing to the length of time elapsing between the publication of articles and their appearance in the abstracting periodicals. These latter are sometimes issued quarterly and they overlap to a large extent. Dr. S. C. Bradford (3) suggests that bureaux should be set up, each dealing with a special subject, to abstract periodical literature, the results being co-ordinated at a central clearing house, and this appears to be a solution to the present problems.

Cuttings and scraps are of vital importance in commercial and technical libraries. Housed in vertical files, they represent the most up-to-date information, and it has been stated that 75 per cent. of this material in a technical library is always in circulation (10). The vertical file houses clippings from newspapers and periodicals, pamphlets, preprints, reprints, and any information not to be considered as a book. It has been suggested that this material should not be accessioned, catalogued, or classified, but grouped alphabetically by subjects in the file. In the catalogue, one is referred from the appropriate subjects to the vertical file, but it may be advantageous to have the clippings classified by the same scheme as are the books.

Preprints and reprints are solicited by the librarian, and this is not to be deprecated as begging, for many authors are pleased to supply libraries with their articles.

Trade catalogues are important in these libraries, and are usually arranged by names of firms, after being

dated. All this material must be carefully sifted at frequent intervals, and obsolete material discarded. Mr. Harold Jolliffe (31) contributes an interesting article on this material, with suggestions for obtaining the catalogues. The vertical file cannot be effectively used if crammed with out-of-date material, and it is essential that the weeding-out process be executed by a person acquainted with the literature.

Patent specifications present a problem to librarians where they are housed, and one cannot do better than follow the procedure at the Patent Office. Mr. Allan Gomme (11-12) provides information on this library, including a description of the method of classification in use, which has also been the subject of a paper by Mr. A. R. Wright (64). The British Patent specifications have been abridged and collected into the well-known volumes of abridgements, but those of other countries are more difficult to consult. Mr. H. E. Potts (46) gives further information on this material, and the weekly Patents Journal, which lists the important accessions of the Patent Office, is most helpful to libraries collecting this material.

Maps, statistics, tables of imports and exports, indexes of trades and industries, photographs, lantern slides, blue prints, and other material must be collected, and in certain libraries one or more of these may be of particular importance. For example, maps must receive primary consideration at Liverpool, this being a shipping and transport centre, and every district will have peculiarities that must be taken into consideration.



LIVERPOOL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Commercial Reference Library



## IV

The formation of catalogues in commercial and technical libraries must receive every consideration. The catalogue is the key to the literature, and its importance cannot be overestimated. Upon the catalogue depends the success of these libraries, for the catalogue reveals information that cannot otherwise be traced.

Every commercial and technical library uses the card form, as discarding is frequently taking place, and the advantage of cards is obvious where up-to-date information is essential. Dictionary catalogues are popular, but there is great advantage in having subject and author entries separate. In certain cases all the material is included in one catalogue, clippings, pamphlets, and trade catalogues being collected together under these headings, and at Manchester these are boxed as classified units and arranged with the books. Mr. L. S. Jast (28) describes this scheme for the cataloguing of temporary material, which works well, but other librarians prefer to have separate catalogues for special matter, such as trade catalogues, photographs, etc. Where they are amalgamated in one sequence, coloured cards are sometimes used to represent different types of material. At Leeds, books are on white cards, pamphlets buff, Government publications blue, trade catalogues salmon, and the file of current date is represented by brown cards. Mr. Richard Haxby (15) provides full details of the routine methods in use in

this library, which include the provision of a card index to the trades of Leeds, and a register of translators.

If indexes can be substituted for catalogues to advantage, this should be effected, and only the barest details need be included in the catalogue entries. These are not permanent, and it is a waste to provide unnecessary information. On the other hand the presence of tables, maps, illustrations, bibliographies, etc., should be noted, as these are of vital importance to readers.

Lists of accessions to the library are sometimes inserted in the bulletins or other periodical publications, and most commercial and technical libraries issue handbooks describing the facilities offered. Those published by Bristol<sup>1</sup> and Southwark<sup>2</sup> are representative, and are useful to advertise the libraries to those who would benefit from their use.

The classification of these libraries is usually by the Dewey scheme, probably modified to suit the requirements of individual libraries, but the Library of Congress classification has also proved a success in commercial and technical libraries. Those attached to public systems are arranged by the same system as the other departments, although elsewhere the Universal Decimal system has been introduced to advantage. It is a wide extension of Dewey, and is worthy of

<sup>1</sup> [Ross, James, ed.] *A guide to the Library of Commerce*. . . . Bristol, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> *Catalogue of the code books, dictionaries, directories, maps, periodicals that may be consulted at the Southwark Commercial Library*. . . . 1937.

consideration for the arrangement of large collections of material on special subjects.

The formation of bibliographies is an important part of the routine. These may consist of a few references supplied to an enquirer, or a complete bibliography of a subject of importance to a large number of readers. Special bibliographies may be printed or duplicated, being maintained up-to-date in card form.

Several business libraries issue bulletins and house journals, these being weekly, monthly or quarterly features, and in most cases they are solely for the use of members of the firm. They contain references to current literature, abstracts, news of current interest and perhaps select bibliographies, and are often duplicated owing to the prohibitive cost of printing. The bulletins of the Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Co. (7), the British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association (9), the Mond Nickel Co. (41), and the British Cast Iron Research Association (43) have been described, and these publications are very useful to those consulting them. That of the British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association, for instance, is circulated to all firms that are members of the Association, and is additional to the information provided, immediately it is available, to those interested in the subject. The abstracts are made by experts, and in this instance an Information Officer answers enquiries, this person not being a member of the library staff. Mr. Harold Jolliffe (30) lists certain house journals that would be useful in public libraries, and provides notes on the contents of these organs.



## V

This brings us to the subject of information bureaux. Certain businesses maintain collections of material in charge of a technical expert, solely for the provision of information, and in a large technical library it has been estimated that 95 per cent. of enquiries are for information rather than for books (10). Every library must be prepared to supply information, and staffs must be trained in the use of reference books for this purpose, but in commercial and technical libraries something more than book knowledge is necessary. Trained librarians should be employed in every library, but it is also advantageous to have a technical expert either on the library staff, or working in close connection with the library, perhaps as an information officer.

Where the material is used solely for the provision of information, it is necessary to administer the collection for the use of the staff. Indexes take the place of catalogues, for instance, and all routine methods are simplified, the librarian, through close contact with the literature, knowing where to find information without the assistance of elaborate tools.

Almost every branch of science and industry possesses its own intelligence organisation, and Mr. Freeman Horn (24) gives a list of these arranged in a roughly classified order. The British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association is a typical example, serving as an intelligence bureau and research centre for the non-ferrous metals industry. This library does

not attempt to amass an exhaustive collection of material on its subject, but fills in gaps in the available sources of information in the district.

Information bureaux supply information to personal enquirers, by telephone, and undertake the preparation of bibliographies, select reports, abstracts and translations. They must file answers to enquiries, and in certain cases supply information only to accredited persons.

Several commercial and technical libraries maintain registers of translators and abstractors, and the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux provides this service for members, taking into consideration the technical qualifications of translators for work with very specialised material.

The use of the photostat apparatus, and the introduction of microphotography and other methods of reproduction are of great value in these libraries. Articles in periodicals, tables, maps, photographs, cuttings and blue prints, can be photographically reproduced for the use of borrowers, and the work of the library is not paralysed by the absence of a large proportion of its stock.

The use of enquiry forms is encountered in commercial and technical libraries, and the object of these is to find out what the enquirer really wants. This is most difficult, for he usually asks for a book that he thinks to contain the required information, but if readers can be persuaded to state their requirements, the library staff can usually provide the answers very quickly. Enquiry forms are also used for the com-

pilation of statistics, should these be considered necessary, and may be filed as records for future use, after being suitably annotated.

## VI

Very few text books are contained in these libraries. Standard works must be purchased, but most of the material is contained in periodicals and cuttings. Telegraph and cable codes, atlases, gazetteers, commercial, technical and language dictionaries, directories, Government and official publications, trade catalogues and patents are among the necessities that must be administered for the use of readers. They must be made readily available, and if separate catalogues are compiled for special material, readers must be guided to the appropriate sections. The value of personal contact with users of the library cannot be over-emphasised. In the initial stages in particular, assistance by a member of the library staff is far more effective than any notice or printed directions, and time taken in guiding new readers is well spent. It enables the users of the library to help themselves, to get more out of the collection, and to value it more highly.

Very few libraries function without some contact with neighbouring libraries. Commercial and technical libraries cannot exist without this co-operation, for it is absolutely impossible for these libraries to purchase all their requirements. Where these libraries are attached to public libraries they can use the general reference stock, and the co-ordination of neighbouring

libraries with similar objectives is most desirable. The most outstanding example of this co-ordination is that at Sheffield, which is the result of the efforts of Mr. J. P. Lamb. An Organisation for the Interchange of Technical Books and Periodicals has been set up in that city, by means of which the special libraries and the City Library pool their resources (25). Union catalogues of these libraries have been compiled, and all loans are effected through the Science and Technology Library of the City Library. The University Library, the Chamber of Commerce, and several large business libraries participate in the scheme, which is most successful and a credit to Sheffield. Mr. J. P. Lamb (32-3) provides further details of this pioneer effort, which could be of even greater advantage if sufficient funds were available.

The duplication of expensive material and the consequential overlapping that results from failure to co-operate is deplorable. Where libraries combine their resources, they can cover the field more thoroughly, and while the smaller libraries reap the benefit of the larger collections, the latter can often reap advantage from their smaller, but more intensely specialised neighbours.

It has also been suggested that libraries specialising in similar branches of knowledge might co-operate in the production of abstracts, bibliographies, and translations, to ensure the prompt publication of this matter where desirable, and to share the costs where necessary. There is not the least doubt about the value of these activities, for abstracts often appear

months after the publication of the actual articles, and abstracting journals overlap to a marked degree. Furthermore, these are not entirely reliable for the use of specialists, as they usually confine themselves to certain periodicals, and anything published elsewhere, however important, is neglected.

## VII

Commercial and technical libraries are extremely important, but their development has been stunted for many years. Where introduced they have thrived, those in our larger cities being proof of the use to which they are put by business men, but they should be much more numerous. Every town should have a collection of books devoted to its industries, and every librarian should endeavour to make this section representative and useful to readers. Business men are slow to take advantage of the facilities offered, but they should be solicited, and the advantages widely advertised. Once readers have reaped advantage they will patronise the source, but librarians must first make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the nature of enquiries that will have to be answered. Local industries must be carefully studied and technical advice taken when building up the initial stock. To attract readers before they can be satisfied is dangerous policy, and if the local firms are consulted, this can be avoided.

There is a great future for these libraries, for so far most of them are in the infancy of their development,

and many are yet to be founded. Those already functioning have proved their worth, and there are many districts where a real need exists for commercial and technical literature administered apart from the general reference collection.

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## CHAPTER VI

### SCHOOL LIBRARIES

*Books are the best things, well used : abused, among the worst.*

EMERSON.

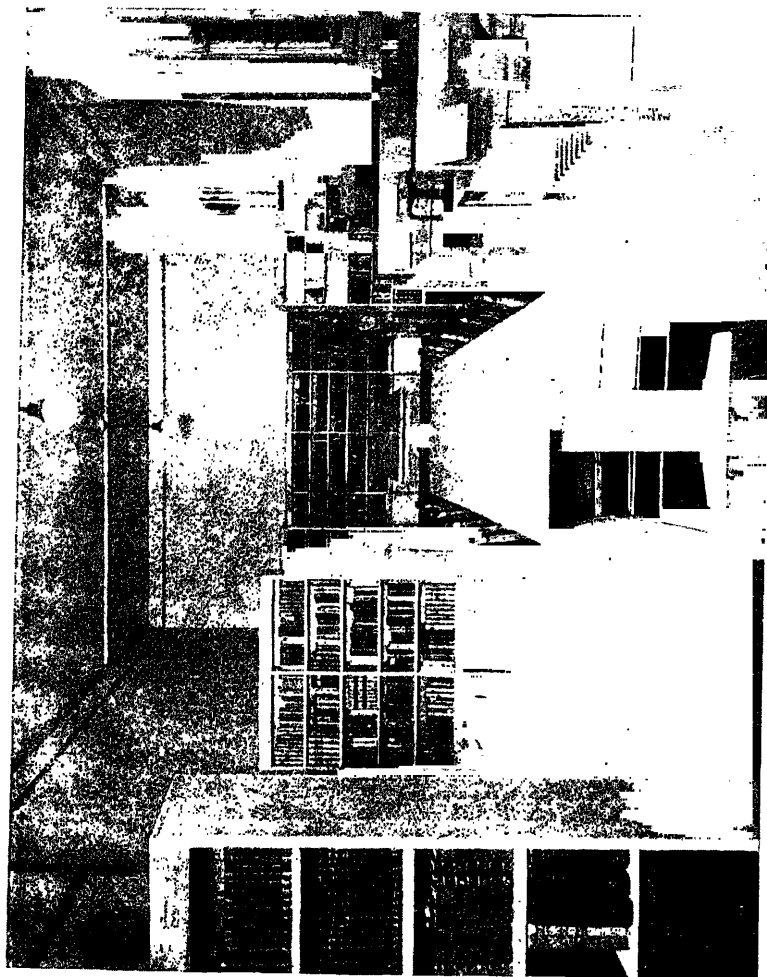
LIBRARIES in schools have in past years received little consideration from the library profession, probably on account of the small size of these collections of books, but they are of great significance. They represent a very special branch of librarianship, not having been developed to any extent, and the impossibility of placing many of these libraries under the control of trained librarians contributes extensively to this state of affairs. The Cheltenham Ladies' College is one of the few examples in this country of a school library in charge of a full-time trained librarian, and although voluntary amateur assistance can do much towards the success of a library, it cannot replace the services of a person trained in the work. The small size and relative expenditure of school libraries in most cases makes the appointment of a trained librarian impossible, and the alternative is the instruction of the acting librarian in the routine methods most useful to the library under consideration, and co-operation with the local public or county library system.

The formation of the School Libraries Section of the Library Association will accomplish much in this

direction. The exchange of ideas between school librarians, and contact with qualified librarians must influence the organisation of these important special libraries, and of recent years much improvement has been noted in the provision of school libraries. They have increased numerically, and their importance in the education of scholars has commenced to be appreciated. Rooms furnished entirely for library purposes, well equipped and provided with suitable stocks take the place of shelves of ancient text books housed in odd cupboards, although it is estimated that even to-day only one out of every four secondary schools provides a separate room for the library. Attractive surroundings and encouragement from the teaching staff are essential, and the importance of school libraries cannot be overestimated.

At one of the ASLIB conferences, Sir Cyril Norwood (9) made the following statement : " I hold that a man is better educated if he knows how to use a library than if he has obtained a Higher Certificate, or even a B.A." The person who knows where to search for information, how to use reference books, and can find his way about in an extensive collection of books is well equipped for the advancement of his education. School libraries can prove of great assistance by teaching the elements of bibliographical reference work, and assisting scholars to appreciate libraries should be part of every educational curriculum.

Education authorities are frequently criticised as teaching subjects that are of little value to the scholar upon leaving school. Practical work is often neglected,



S. MARY'S SCHOOL, WANTAGE  
The Library



and it would be advantageous if every school taught the scholars how to improve their knowledge after the school-leaving age. The use of public libraries in this connection is of vital importance, and anyone beginning a career with a thorough knowledge of the use of books has a great advantage over others not so equipped.

We learn more by reading than from any other source, and books play an important part in our education. Despite this fact, the art of reading is seldom taught, and the knowledge of how to use books and libraries is considered to be hereditary, for instruction is seldom provided. Public libraries do little more than attempt to introduce new readers to the facilities offered, and the majority of borrowers wander about until they chance upon something that interests them, wasting much time through ignorance of the tools provided for their guidance.

It is obvious that instruction in the use of books and libraries should be included in the school curriculum. It should be part of everyone's education, for the knowledge so gained is invaluable in post-school days, and it is easier to instruct a class of pupils than children joining the public library singly. School teachers are rarely qualified to give this instruction, but the public librarian or children's librarian would readily co-operate with the education authority for this purpose.

Every school should have a library, and it should be progressive and 'alive.' Some schools house collections of ancient text books in locked cupboards, giving them the dignified title of 'school library,' but



the tendency is towards marked improvement in this department. Where possible, a room should be devoted entirely to use as a library, and in certain instances education authorities have provided this room fitted up with book-cases and other suitable furniture. The library authority provides the stock, and supervises this by appointing members of its staff to take charge of the library for certain hours during the day. This arrangement varies in different districts, but close co-operation with the local library can prove of great advantage to the school library. County libraries sometimes deposit collections of books in school libraries, the volumes being changed periodically, and the librarians of local systems are always ready to give assistance when required.

## II

The funds available for expenditure on school libraries vary from £10 to £300, but a common sum ranges between £25 and £40. This is extremely low, and when considered in conjunction with the number of pupils must be revealed as totally inadequate. The purchase of books is frequently supplemented by gifts, and the loan of selections of volumes from the local library further aids the provision of sufficient stock, but the sum of money mentioned above is inclusive of all expenditure. Periodicals and binding, for example, must be provided for out of this money, and it is obvious that very few school libraries can function adequately in these circumstances.

Many school libraries are organised as replicas of the public library system. The methods of accessioning, cataloguing and classification are similar, but on a smaller scale, and the necessity for standard cataloguing rules and classification methods cannot be over-emphasised. One of the most important features of school libraries is their value as introductory to the public library systems. Cataloguing rules should be similar to those followed in the local library, although only the barest details need be incorporated on the cataloguing cards. Only information likely to be useful to the readers should be given, and in cataloguing, as in all methods of routine, the rules given by Miss Monica Cant (2) in her useful book on school libraries may be studied to advantage. Simplicity should be the rule, but accuracy should never be sacrificed, and material likely to assist readers when using the public library can be incorporated to advantage. The dictionary catalogue is popular, but author and subject, or author and classified catalogues are also common. In small collections it is probably advisable to incorporate the entries into one alphabetical sequence, but there are also advantages in having author and subject entries separate.

The schemes of classification in use differ considerably, but modifications and adaptations of Dewey are numerous. Several of these interesting schemes have been published in the *School Library Review*, and outline schemes for special consideration by school libraries abound. The Cheltenham Classification was evolved specially for this type of library, and it is

extremely interesting and well planned. However, if we are to consider the value of the scheme to the reader when using the public library, in most instances the Dewey classification must be adopted. It can readily be simplified to meet the requirements of small collections of books, and is quite suitable for the purpose. The Bliss scheme of classification is also worthy of consideration by school libraries, having been adopted at Bridlington School and by the Manchester Education Committee Library, but so far it has been introduced into very few library systems in this country.

The hours of opening depend upon individual circumstances, and chiefly upon the time that the honorary librarian can give to the work. In certain schools, classes spend periods in the library as part of their curriculum, and the practice is to be commended. The scholars are taught how to use the reference books, and are allowed to use the library to solve problems that occur in their lessons. The library becomes the information bureau, and if equipped for the purpose, it can acquit itself to advantage in this capacity. Scholars should be taught to find out for themselves, and instruction in the use of bibliographical reference tools is important. Public librarians can frequently assist school librarians by providing sources of information, and most public systems provide special facilities for school teachers, who are permitted to borrow extra books.

Co-operation between the school and the public library can result in benefit to the latter by increasing the number of its borrowers, but this question should

be carefully approached. There should be no suggestion of forcing scholars to join the public library, for this frequently occurs, although perhaps indirectly. The teacher is provided with tickets to be given to non-members and these join the public library to avoid disfavour. It has been suggested by Miss Frances M. Wileman (11) that this is the cause of the falling-off of borrowers at the school leaving age, and it probably is a contributory factor. Teachers sometimes fail to appreciate the value of voluntary registration for borrowing, and overlook the psychological importance of not forcing anything upon children, however pleasant and advantageous it may prove.

Visits to the public library by pupils during school hours are sometimes arranged, and classes may meet at the public library for instruction. Lectures at the latter institution also serve to attract potential borrowers, but as far as possible scholars should be given freedom when on the library premises. Dominance by teacher or librarian does not attract the scholar to take advantage of the facilities that are provided for his welfare, and any suggestion of undue supervision must suggest compulsion to the youthful visitor. Too many children, having joined the public library, are driven away by thoughtlessness, and it is extremely difficult to attract borrowers who have previously experienced the library system and been disappointed.

### III

The stock of a school library must be general, and fiction and light literature should be represented.

School text books, periodicals, and reference books must be stocked, but the recreational value of reading cannot be ignored. Standard authors should be purchased in good editions, and in all cases the value of the book to the user must be considered, having due regard for the sum of money available for book purchase. Very expensive items cannot be considered, although it is more economical to purchase a well-produced edition of a book that will stand hard wear, than to buy one that will quickly fall to pieces. Well-printed, illustrated and bound volumes are attractive and foster the love of books, and one cannot do better than encourage this appreciation. Good literature should be presented in an attractive form, and to the youthful mind the outward appearance of a volume has great significance.

Education authorities have great opportunities in the course of the education of children. Upon the curriculum in force at the school depends the foundation of a child's knowledge and, to a certain extent, of his character. To neglect any possible opportunity of presenting information that will prove of value in later life is to depreciate the value of education, but how many schools initiate pupils into the value of books and libraries? It is during the school years that the information can be acquired and appreciated, for adequate individual instruction is an impossibility, largely owing to the smallness of library staffs. Public libraries desire to attract borrowers of school-leaving age, but these are often not sufficiently interested in books to desire to read. Perhaps they have had the

desire for learning driven out during the process of education, and it is obvious that the remedy lies with the schools. Where the library forms an important part of the instruction, and scholars are taught the value of books, learning to appreciate the importance of literature and libraries, it is obvious that they will turn to the public library for information after leaving school. The school library, in addition to being of value in the education of scholars, proves a useful introduction to the public system, and it is in the interests of the library authority to co-operate with the school as far as possible.

Co-operation between the education and library authorities, and the librarian and the teachers is essential. If these are really interested in the welfare of the school library, all can assist to promote its success. The education authority can provide suitable accommodation, furniture, and a sum of money to be expended on the purchase of books. The public library can supplement the stock from its shelves, or even supply the entire collection, these books being changed periodically. Teachers and librarians can assist each other in the selection of books for purchase, and in the determination of the policy of the school library. Discussion between these officers can do much to promote the welfare of their respective institutions, and it is only by whole-hearted co-operation that these libraries can adequately perform the duties for which they are established.

Unfortunately, in very few areas is this mutual

co-operation in force, but the system at Edinburgh described by Mr. R. Butchart (1) is worthy of note. The Edinburgh Public Library has established branches in the school buildings, two of these being solely for the use of scholars. The third is also available to the public, the library being accessible after school hours through a separate entrance. Each class has a period of forty minutes per week in the library, and during the lunch hour and at other periods the library is open for general use.

#### IV

In certain school libraries, pupils are allowed to assist in the routine work of the library. This is of particular value where the teacher in charge has little time to devote to library work, and the scholars derive much benefit from their light duties. Spare-time librarians are sometimes placed in charge of collections of books, but wherever possible, library work should be done during periods of the day instead of teaching. One cannot expect a master regularly to give his spare time to the library, and it is essential that the library should be given a status somewhat above that of an odd-time occupation.

A well-equipped and administered school library is invaluable to the school of which it is an integral appendage, and its importance in the education of scholars is inestimable. Conversely, a dirty, ill-selected, badly administered collection of books is a disgrace to the school housing it, and the damage

done to those forced to use it is incalculable. Badly administered libraries do much harm to borrowers, and in the young they create an impression that is rarely overcome in later life. This type of library still persists, and in most instances there is little excuse for a state of affairs largely resulting from apathy.

The impression conveyed by the school library lingers in later life, and it is this type of library that must first receive attention. Public librarians should look to these institutions as housing their prospective borrowers, and should endeavour to assist the development of school libraries into worthy collections of books.

Education authorities must co-operate if we are to experience the required results, by the foundation and maintenance of school libraries where these do not at present exist, and by the encouragement of the efforts of those already maintaining literary collections. School libraries are in an early stage of growth, and only by assistance from those qualified for the task can they develop in an adequate manner. Upon their development depends their success, and public libraries will benefit if they assist school libraries to function in a suitable manner, performing their duties in aiding the diffusion of knowledge, which will later be carried on by the municipal systems.



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## CHAPTER VII

### CO-OPERATION IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES

*Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where to find information upon it.*

BOSWELL, *Life of Johnson*.

CO-OPERATION between libraries is probably as old as libraries themselves, for we read of the loan of manuscripts to libraries for copying purposes in the earliest days of librarianship. Until very recent times, however, this co-operation was unofficial, and not organised as we now experience it. Even ten years ago, inter-lending between libraries was largely the result of friendship between the respective librarians, and much benefit was derived from this unauthorised irregularity.

Unorthodox though it was, this casual borrowing was of great importance, for it established the recognition of the need for organised co-operation, and laid the foundations of our present system. The universities were the first group of libraries to recognise the value of the co-ordination of the resources of their stocks, and for several years a system has been in existence whereby these libraries co-operate for the interlending of books. The headquarters of this scheme are now at the National Central Library,

where it proves useful to the other systems for inter-library lending.

Many library systems have been slow to recognise the value of participating in the work done by the National Central Library, and the Carnegie Trustees have accomplished much towards increasing the number of outlier libraries by making grants to libraries on condition that they allow their stocks to be borrowed through the National Central Library. No library is forced to lend any book, but special libraries, even the smallest, can be most useful upon occasion, and books in constant use in a library are not expected to be lent.

Co-operation has been criticised on the grounds that the larger libraries donate most towards the funds of the scheme, lend most books, and borrow very few. This may be a fact, but there is also another consideration. The large library is expected to be able to supply almost everything from its stock, and, failing to do so, it is the duty of that library to procure the required material. The fact that a very small special library can assist the larger general library, is a very good reason for the expenditure of a larger sum towards the upkeep of the system making this possible. More is expected of the large libraries and they must be prepared to spend more upon the system making the special material available to their readers, for it is often impossible for them to purchase it themselves. The small special libraries rarely use the large general libraries, but usually require rare items on their own subjects, or works on relative subjects

that are, from their point of view, not worth purchasing. Libraries specialising in similar subjects, and the university libraries are generally called upon, although the special collections of public libraries sometimes prove useful to special libraries.

It has been stated that certain of the smaller general libraries cut down their expenditure on books, and expect to borrow most of their requirements in return for a small annual grant to the lending bureaux. This is effected at the expense of the larger systems, which are expected to supply most of the books, but it is doubtful if this practice can continue indefinitely. Libraries do not lend books in continual use, and no efficient library system can rely upon outside borrowing for the satisfaction of its readers.

Most of the larger libraries are satisfied with the number of books they are able to borrow in exchange for their own loans to other libraries. They appreciate the fact that while they lend books not likely to be required by their own readers, they borrow volumes that their readers demand. As Captain R. Wright (20) expresses it, "a lender is a prouder man than a borrower," and no library should attempt to borrow any item that should be on its own shelves.

The inter-loan system has many critics, and although its merits have completely overruled most of the criticisms, there are two disadvantages that are outstanding. Firstly, the delay at present experienced between the enquiry for the book and its delivery to the reader is sometimes a matter of months rather than days. It is appreciated that this is due to the

difficulty in tracing books that do not appear in printed catalogues, those of the regional bureaux, or the union catalogues, and the method of circulating lists to libraries at home, and even abroad, must cause much delay. This is being remedied as the above catalogues grow more complete, and the formation of a catalogue of the outlier libraries of the National Central Library further assists this process.

Borrowers are often expected to pay the postage on books, although certain libraries pay that for one way, but this sum of money mounts up considerably and is thought to be excessive. If a reader cannot be satisfied at his library, that library should shoulder the expense of supplying the reader with requisite books. Large, heavy books cost several shillings in postage, and frequent borrowing is prohibited to many serious students. The alternative remedy is the reduction of postage on books, or even its complete removal. Mr. J. H. P. Pafford (10) mentions that books lent between libraries in Switzerland are allowed through the post free of charge, and this would be of great advantage to libraries if adopted in this country. It has been argued that the payment of postage renders the abuse of the system by casual readers impossible, but it must also discourage the serious student who is unable to afford the expense.

## II

Co-operation between libraries has not stopped at the inter-loan of books, and one of the most important

results of inter-library relations is the production of union catalogues. Those housed at the headquarters of the regional bureaux and at the National Central Library, and the printed union catalogues, of which the *Union list of the periodicals in the university libraries* is particularly noteworthy, are invaluable aids in tracing required material. The London Union Catalogue of books in the London Public Libraries was commenced largely as the result of an inspiring paper read at an ASLIB conference by Mr. F. Seymour Smith (16). In conjunction with the Union Catalogue of the Outlier Libraries (both of these being housed at the National Central Library), this completes the chain of catalogues forming the network which covers the whole library system of this country. Several of these catalogues are still incomplete, and certain of them are undergoing the process of amalgamation, but they represent the foundations of a complete finding-list to all British libraries. The writings of Colonel Luxmoore Newcombe (4-8) and of Mr. J. H. P. Pafford (9-11) give fuller descriptions of these joint catalogues, which are proving well worth the expense of their compilation.

While we have joint catalogues, we have no system of co-operative cataloguing, and the waste of time resulting from each library cataloguing its own stock is deplorable. Central cataloguing is a necessity that has been fully appreciated in other countries, but remains a dream in Great Britain. It has been suggested that the British Museum should be the centre for the distribution of printed cataloguing cards, but

there are numerous difficulties to be encountered. Miss Jessie Powell (13) mentions the National Central Library as a more convenient centre for this service, but here again there are numerous adverse circumstances to be considered, not the least important being that of finance.

It is believed that the Government should give more assistance to libraries, and commence by fostering a scheme that would benefit every library. If the National Central Library became the distributing centre for cataloguing cards it would be advantageous to make this a copyright library, and it has been suggested that this should be done at the expense of Trinity College, Dublin. The result would benefit the libraries of this country to an enormous extent, for the volumes so collected would be available for loan after the cataloguing cards had been compiled. Our national libraries are preserving the literature for posterity by carefully collecting books for reference purposes. Is it too much to expect that there should be one copy of every book published available for loan? It would appear to be an ideal to be aimed at, and it could readily be effected through the admirable organisation at present functioning at the National Central Library.

The value of central cataloguing must be experienced to be appreciated, and careful consideration by the organising body would avoid the inclusion of features that might merit criticism from the majority of librarians. For example, headings could be made adjustable, and the entries might bear the numbers

of two schemes of classification, as do the Library of Congress cards. The time-saving that would result from this scheme is worthy of consideration, and library catalogues would be standardised. The process of amalgamation into union catalogues would be facilitated, and the library service as a whole would benefit.

As an alternative to the National Central Library doing the actual cataloguing, it has been suggested that the larger special libraries should undertake this task, each dealing with the subjects covered by its respective stock. The entries would be edited at the National Central Library, and the cards issued from that source. There are several problems to be overcome if we are to have an exhaustive catalogue of new books in card form available upon subscription, but all can be effectively solved by the co-operative efforts of those concerned.

### III

The co-operative purchase of books has proved useful where introduced, but it has only existed on a very small scale. Librarians contemplating the purchase of an expensive book or periodical sometimes ascertain the whereabouts of the nearest available copy, and decide whether it is necessary to duplicate an expensive item within a small area. In certain districts librarians meet periodically to discuss the purchase of this material, and arrange that the libraries in most need of a volume shall purchase it, lending it



to the others in certain circumstances. It is only by co-ordination that the smaller libraries can hope to eke out their financial resources, and co-operation between public and special libraries can prove very effective in this respect.

Many libraries house duplicate copies of books and periodicals that are not required, and the exchange of this material can readily be effected between libraries that already work together in close relationship. Where this is not the case, the preparation of lists, their circulation to libraries, and the inevitable heavy correspondence between libraries anxious to exchange material, is uneconomical when compared with the resultant benefit.

The inter-change of library assistants is another instance of co-operation that would benefit those participating. An assistant in a small, highly specialised library would gain useful experience in a library devoted to similar subjects, and a librarian employed in a general library would benefit from service in a specialised institution. There are great possibilities in this exchange of assistants, for the experience gained is useful both to the individuals concerned and to the libraries with which they are permanently connected. So far this exchange has chiefly been made with libraries situated abroad, but the value of inter-library exchange of staff in this country should not be ignored.

Another aspect of library staffing is that of the employment of joint assistants where libraries are closely situated and unable to afford the full-time employment of an extra assistant. Groups of libraries

with similar objectives might co-operate in the employment of assistants common to all libraries participating in the arrangement. It would, of course, be necessary to have some full-time permanent staff in each library, but it is believed that the shortage of staff so common in special libraries would be partially overcome by this co-operative employment of assistants. Special work, such as the cataloguing and classification of pamphlets, for example, might be done by this means, together with the numerous other tasks for which the permanent staff cannot find time.

It has been suggested that special libraries devoted to similar subjects might co-operate in the production of abstracts. Abstracting periodicals appear many months after the periodicals that they include, and it is possible that the co-operative efforts of groups of special libraries (technical libraries, for example), would result in the more prompt and frequent publication of this material. The services of experts would probably be required, but it is a suggestion that merits attention.

#### IV

Most special libraries are organised so that material is available as quickly as possible. In business, commercial, technical, medical, and scientific libraries, literature is often required urgently, and as previously stated, it is frequently impossible to obtain material from other libraries through the normal channels with any degree of promptness. It is suggested that special libraries should be grouped by subject, the

largest library of each group acting as a pivot around which the activities of all might circulate. All enquiries for books would be sent to this library, which would, by its size, be in a better position than any other to satisfy the enquirer from its own stock, or, by means of a joint-catalogue be able to indicate the whereabouts of any book. For example, the Science Library would be in a position to act as a central agency for all pure and industrial scientific libraries, and similar groups might be formed of libraries devoted to the arts, medicine, commerce, and technology.

By this method the smaller libraries would apply direct to the source most likely to be able to satisfy their needs, and enquiries for this special material might be passed on to the appropriate centre from the National Central Library. It is probable that most enquiries for special material come from specialists and not from the general reader, and most specialists can use a library devoted to their subject. The work of the National Central Library would be simplified, and borrowers would receive their requirements more promptly by borrowing direct from the source.

The National Central Library would deal with enquiries from public libraries, and trace material not available within the respective groups. It would also continue to trace books not available in this country.

The groups so formed might co-operate in the publication of joint catalogues, which would prove invaluable. The chief difficulty is the fact that at present, theoretically speaking, libraries are not expected to borrow books from other libraries, even if

in the same building, without application to the National Central Library, and it is believed that this anomaly must cease with the development of the inter-lending system. A library, having borrowed a volume of a journal from a neighbouring library, should not be expected to apply to the National Central Library when requiring another volume of the same journal. These remarks are also applicable to the regional bureaux, which are doing such excellent work in the interests of library co-operation.

The present system of co-operation is still in the infancy of its development. Several union catalogues are still incomplete and the amalgamation of all of these tools is a momentous, yet not impossible task that would prove beneficial to the co-operation movement. The printing of this compilation as a national catalogue is even more ambitious, but it is a possibility in the minds of those with Utopian ideas.

## V

Groups of libraries might co-operate in the publication of weekly bulletins containing lists of requirements not readily traced, lists of duplicates for exchange, and other items of interest to libraries participating in the scheme. This would prove useful as a means of keeping libraries in close relationship with each other, and fostering the spirit of co-operative action.

It cannot be too highly stressed that libraries are not compelled to lend material. Books likely to be

required by their own readers, and rare or valuable material are not available for inter-library lending. The use of the photostat and other mechanical means of reproduction have proved invaluable to the system of co-operation. Articles in periodicals, maps, plans, photographs and other objects can be reproduced quite cheaply, rendering the loan of material in constant use in a library, or of special value, unnecessary. The loan of prints, photographs, lantern slides, and matter of historical interest to other libraries is not as general as might be. Neighbouring libraries could exchange their collections of local material for short periods to advantage, for in most cases each library has an entirely separate group of readers.

Too many libraries house material that is never used, and is of little value to them, but which would prove invaluable to another institution. It should be possible to exchange such material, enabling each library to function as a live organisation, instead of a morgue in which it is difficult to separate the living from the dead. This is particularly applicable to periodical publications and donations, both of which are often maintained indefinitely on the shelves of libraries to which they are of no use whatsoever. They should be exchanged rather than thrown away, for there are usually some libraries that would welcome this material. There are very few books that are not useful in some capacity, and it should be possible to house a copy of every book where it is most likely to be used.

The National Central Library administers a scheme

for the exchange of duplicate material, which is proving of great value. Libraries submit lists of duplicates, which are collected together in one sequence and circulated to those libraries participating in the scheme. Those requiring items mark them, and the National Central Library arranges the dispatch of the material to those libraries where it will be most useful.

Discarding is a difficult part of the routine in most libraries, and a process that is shirked by many librarians. There is always the possibility that the books disposed of may be asked for later, but this difficulty could be overcome. If a central body, the National Central Library for instance, would take upon itself to house a copy of every publication for loan to libraries, these institutions might place their discarded items at the disposal of the central body, secure in the fact they could always procure copies when required. The central body would build up the collection from the apparently obsolete stocks of other libraries, and the system would prove useful for the preservation of former editions of current text books. These are often of great historical interest, and it is believed that many libraries would benefit by placing stock that now encumbers their shelves in a central depot. Most libraries suffer from lack of shelving space, and all libraries house too much material that is shelved for the possible enquirer rather than the probable borrower. Some libraries can afford to shelve stock that is never used, while others must cater for the person who requires the material urgently when in need of it, but the majority of libraries are

handicapped by having at least 50 per cent. of their stocks dead as far as their own readers are concerned.

The National Central Library does, in fact, accept discarded books that are likely to prove useful, but the scheme is not widely recognised and appreciated.

It is impossible to state that any book will never be enquired for, and the pooling of the stocks that are shelved as furniture, or for the possible enquirer, would prove beneficial to all concerned in the project. The libraries would have increased shelving space, while having the volumes available at a central depository, and the latter, if working in conjunction with the National Central Library, would prove a useful adjunct to library co-operation.

## VI

The formation of the regional bureaux and the rapid growth of the National Central Library have resulted in the extension of the activities of all libraries taking advantage of the facilities offered. These organisations have developed in an extraordinary manner during recent years, proving of great value to those institutions participating in the movement for inter-library co-operation. The National Central Library is greatly hampered by lack of funds and insufficient staff, so that its activities have been curtailed, merely the minimum service being maintained, for development is impossible under these circumstances. This library would probably benefit from the formation of subject groups of libraries, as indeed it has

by the introduction of the regional bureaux as headquarters serving libraries in certain areas. It is believed that the special libraries would welcome this arrangement, which would enable the National Central Library to extend its activities and concentrate upon this work.

While considering the enormous possibilities of library co-operation and surveying the work already accomplished, one cannot resist deploring the fact that the National Central Library, as the centre of this important activity, should be hampered by lack of financial means. Subscriptions from libraries are comparatively small, but these can rarely afford to increase the sum annually donated. It is evident that the Government should considerably increase its grant towards the upkeep of a service that has become a national necessity. The Government does very little for the benefit of libraries in this country, comparing very unfavourably with those of the United States and certain European countries, for instance, and it is to be deplored that the value of the services rendered by these institutions cannot be suitably recognised.

Few persons who have had practical experience of co-operation between libraries for the benefit of their respective readers can fail to be impressed by the tremendous possibilities of the development of the scheme. No one is more aware of these possibilities than those responsible for the organisation of the system, and we can be assured that the main difficulty is that of finance. The removal of that burden would



result in the extension of existing facilities, and the development of the system along lines at present existing merely as suggestions and ideals.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FUTURE OF SPECIAL LIBRARIES

*The love of books is a love which requires neither justification, apology, nor defence.*

LANGFORD.

FROM the previous chapters it will be recognised that these libraries are not always functioning in an adequate manner. Many of them carry on the traditions expounded in the last century, and fail to provide the maximum service possible with the aid of modern library equipment and reference tools. Some of them can be said to satisfy their readers, but no librarian can be satisfied with his own efforts unless his aim is to obtain the utmost benefit possible from the collection under his care for the service of his borrowers.

Much of this backwardness is due to financial considerations. The staffs are far too small numerically, untrained assistants are common, and as a general rule library staffs are grossly underpaid. Pursuing a non-progressive policy, many of these libraries exist merely as collections of books; the routine is methodically carried out, readers' requests attended to, and the libraries become stagnant. There is no attempt to provide the little extra service that stimulates enthusiasm and promotes progress, and no library can exist as

such without being in a constant state of progressive activity.

The picture painted is not very inspiring to those seeking positions on the staffs of special libraries, or perhaps it is to those delighting in reorganisation. Of recent years there has been a gradual awakening in special librarianship. The value of trained assistants is beginning to be appreciated, and with the increase in the number of trained librarians, these can command higher salaries and better working conditions.

A trained staff makes a great difference to the organisation of a special library, for it can obtain the utmost out of the literature, however scanty the raw material. The introduction of trained assistants brings new vitality to these collections, and their services must be appreciated after a very short period. The future of special libraries depends to a great extent on their staffs. If these are efficient and progressive, this will reflect in the organisation of the libraries concerned and in the services rendered by these institutions.

Special libraries should co-operate more fully with each other, libraries with similar objectives collaborating to their mutual advantage. Modern conditions render isolation impossible, for contact with institutions having similar problems stimulates the progress that is necessary for the existence of a live collection of books. Co-operation has been dealt with more fully in the previous chapter, and its importance in the future development of special libraries cannot be over-emphasised.

## II

School libraries have improved considerably during recent years and their future development is assured by the formation of the School Libraries Section of the Library Association. Close contact with experienced librarians will do much towards the elucidation of the problems of those libraries of necessity functioning in the hands of amateurs. Well-equipped libraries forming useful introductions to the use of libraries in later life, replace the collections of books in cupboards of the past, and the ideal of having an efficient library in every elementary, secondary and public school is far from being an impossibility.

The commercial and technical libraries already functioning are doing great service to the districts concerned, but there are too few libraries of this type. Every large town should house these libraries, for a collection of books on commercial and technical subjects shelved in a general collection cannot take the place of a library administered solely for the business man. The need for a library of this type in London is urgent, and the provision of a central library in this area should be seriously considered without delay.

Business libraries are increasing numerically, but are not always considered favourably by trained librarians. As a department of a large firm, a library shows no monetary profit, and although its value may be obvious, it is often the first department to suffer the effects of economy. Those attached to the larger, well-established firms have proved their merits and

become vital necessities to the businesses maintaining them, but a great deal of harm can be done to the movement for the extension of business libraries by the employment of untrained assistants. Only a trained librarian can obtain the best from a library, and in a business library particularly, the best is the minimum required.

The university libraries are frequently cramped for space, and their development has been hindered by these circumstances. Of recent years, however, several of these have been rebuilt or extended, and the opportunity given by the consequential removal taken to re-organise the collection. Several of these libraries remain badly administered in the light of modern librarianship, poorly staffed, and with ample room for general improvement.

Medical, scientific and libraries attached to learned societies also suffer from being understaffed, and the need for trained librarians again shows itself. None of these libraries can develop in a satisfactory manner without the guidance of an experienced administrator as librarian, and the reorganisation of any collection of books should commence with the appointment of an officer capable of efficiently carrying out his duties.

### III

There is a need for the co-ordination of special libraries, for at present they frequently exist as isolated units. The best means of making this an accomplished fact would be the formation of a branch of the Library

Association, or a separate association devoted entirely to the welfare of special libraries. At present their requirements are almost completely disregarded, and for this reason few assistants engaged in special librarianship belong to any professional body. A suitable organ for the expression of ideas is a necessity, for at the present time the librarianship periodicals stress unduly the public library point of view. Articles dealing with topics of particular interest to special librarians are excluded as being 'too specialised,' and it is a fact that the majority of readers taking these journals are employed in public library work. The remedy is obviously that of providing an organ devoted to special librarianship, and there would be no lack of material for this publication.

These remarks may appear to ignore the existence of the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux which has accomplished so much for the benefit of special libraries, but it is considered that this Association is more closely concerned with business and technical libraries than with special libraries as considered here. A definition of the term 'special' as applied to libraries has frequently been attempted by A.S.L.I.B., but without conclusive results, and several types included in this monograph are not represented in the Association. Furthermore, the necessity for trained librarians is not always recognised as an essential qualification, and the membership of A.S.L.I.B. includes a certain proportion of amateurs from the librarianship point of view. The progress of the library profession is frequently hampered by the



well-meaning efforts of persons with technical qualifications attempting to enforce methods that they have evolved in the handling of books, but which are by no means ideal from the librarian's standpoint. The Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux has done much useful work by the compilation and publication of the *ASLIB Directory* and by its other activities mentioned elsewhere, but as now constituted it could not function as the headquarters for special libraries as defined in Chapter I.

It would be a great pity if a separate association were formed for the promotion of special librarianship, but at the present time progress is hampered by the lack of facilities for the exchange of ideas. Also, the assistants employed in these libraries need encouragement to pursue their studies in librarianship, and it is believed that the present professional examinations are totally unsuitable for those working in special libraries. If these assistants could be attracted to become members of the Library Association, this body would reap financial benefit from a considerably increased membership, for it is no exaggeration to stress the small number of special librarians at present attached to the Library Association.

An increase in the number of trained librarians is most necessary before special libraries can be re-organised, and the preliminary theoretical knowledge obtained for examination purposes is grossly inadequate.

The classification of special libraries is often inadequate, the catalogues are either too full, or too numerous, indexes often being sufficient where three types of

catalogue are considered necessary. The provision of an author catalogue only is disgraceful in any library, and the special library in particular must provide adequate tools for the assistance of readers.

The introduction of trained librarians assists the rapid progress of these libraries, and complete re-organisation of collections is frequently necessary. Even in large university libraries this has been accomplished, for although a tremendous task, it is not an impossibility. To shirk this duty is merely to put it off until another day, for backward libraries cannot exist as units of a co-ordinated system. They must fulfil their obligations, and obsolete methods of librarianship hamper the development of any library system. Modern research workers and business men will not tolerate libraries that do not provide the facilities available in similar institutions, for libraries must progress with the advance of knowledge. An up-to-date, efficient library is not only necessary, it is indispensable to every scientific, medical, business or teaching institution.

Very few libraries admit that they are adequately financed, and this limitation must reflect in the services provided. If a library provides the very best facilities possible, and proves itself indispensable to the institution of which it forms a department, it can often obtain increased grants for special purposes. Extra staff is urgently required in most special libraries, and their adequate remuneration remains a desirability. One cannot obtain the best service from a collection or books in a library that is so staffed that only the barest

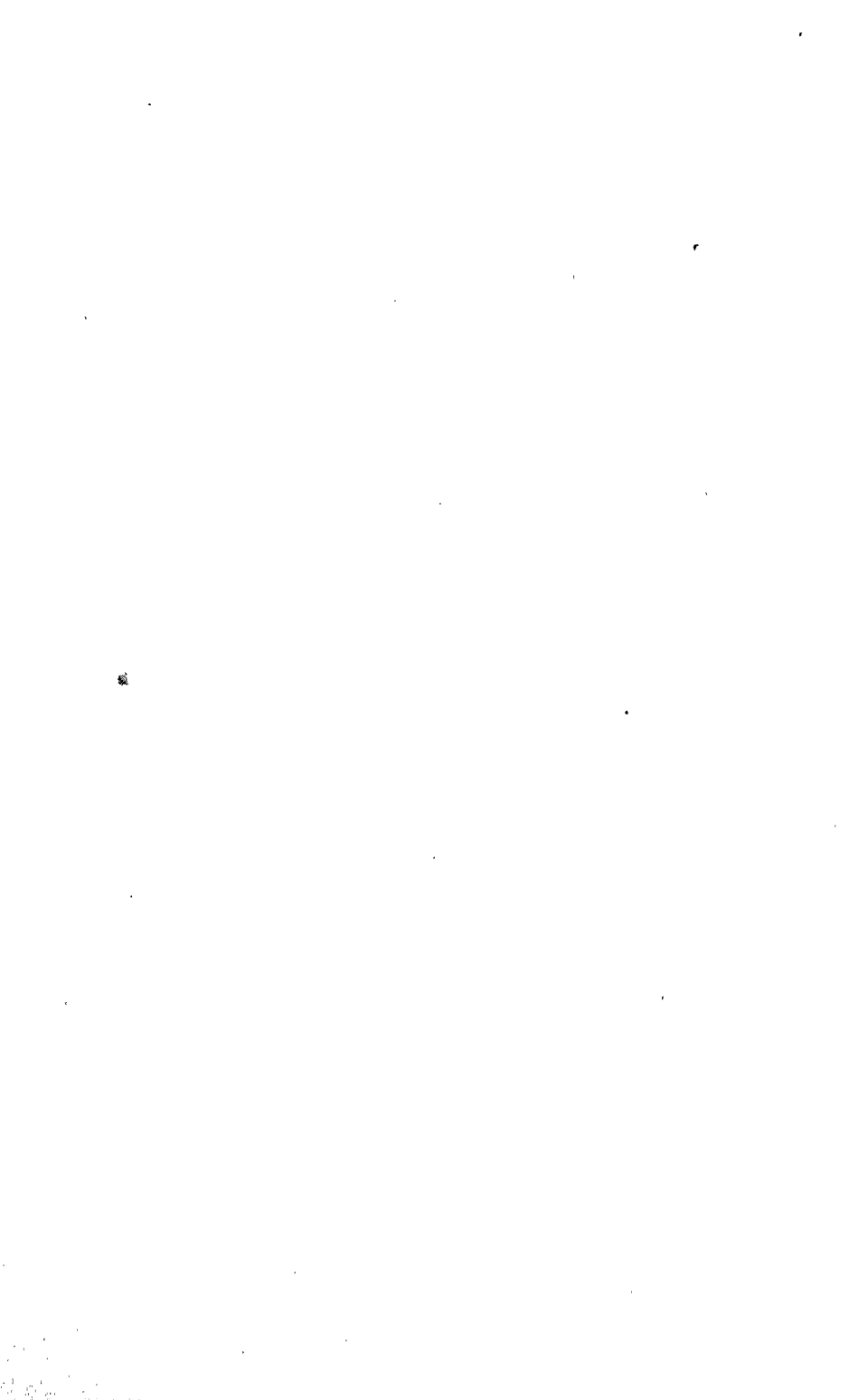
routine work is possible. A library existing in these circumstances is not providing a satisfactory service, and is detrimental to librarianship in general.

#### IV

The development of special libraries has greatly increased their value, not only to their own readers, but to other libraries. Public libraries can borrow from these specialised collections through the National Central Library, and special libraries can also give assistance in the selection of technical and scientific literature. If organised on a carefully planned basis, co-operation between libraries can result in benefit to all concerned in the arrangement, the smaller libraries reaping the advantage of the larger general collections, the public systems obtaining the benefit of experience with highly specialised literature, and having these books available in the smaller, special libraries. No library need provide more facilities than it can benefit from in other systems, but no library should judge the value of the inter-lending system by the number of books borrowed and loaned. One cannot estimate the value of the service, but it can be expressed as being a means whereby any book can be provided for anybody anywhere. This is a slight exaggeration, for not every library makes its collection of books available for loan, but there are few books that are absolutely unobtainable, and any person being a member of a library can take advantage of the inter-library lending system.

Librarians must aim at the inclusion of every library in the system for co-operation, as only by this means can full advantage of the scheme be capable of achievement. It is believed that some of the suggestions previously set forth would assist in the provision of a copy of every book for borrowing purposes. This ideal is not an impossibility, for modern methods of photographic reproduction make it possible to produce facsimiles of rare material, and for most purposes these facsimiles can take the place of the originals to advantage.

The future of special libraries must depend upon their rate of progress, for stagnant libraries impede the advancement of others, particularly where co-ordination is an established fact. Co-operation hastens the development of librarianship, and if libraries combine to secure their progress at a uniform rate, the weaker taking advantage of experiments conducted in those more fully equipped for the purpose, the future of special librarianship as a profession is assured.



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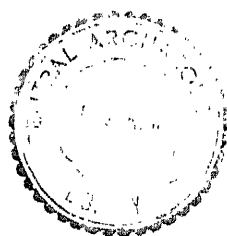
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